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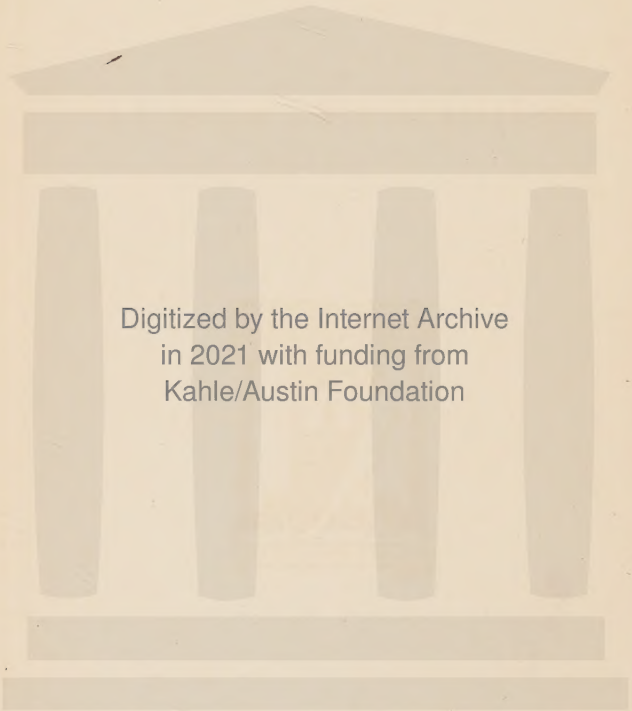
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English Essayists

A Reader's Handbook

By

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of Bowdoin College

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PREFACE

THIS is a handbook for readers of English essays. The compiler knows of few things more subject to abuse than books about books. If used independently, or deliberately read from cover to cover and dismissed with that, this book, he thinks, will be abused. It is intended to accompany the reading of essays, and to serve as a sort of reading-glass for the clearer disclosure of their distinguishing characteristics, their merits, their delights. For experienced readers of essays it offers little; beginners and occasional readers it should serve to make rapidly more experienced.

A meritorious essay, like any other piece of real literature, has distinction and worth quite apart from other essays and from the author who wrote it. More definitely than most kinds of literature, however, the essay acquires added interest from a knowledge of other essays and from acquaintance with the author as a man. The subjective quality of the essay, the painting of self which philosophy no less than tradition assigns to it as a distinguishing feature, makes the reason for this readily apparent. In order to appreciate *Of Studies* and *Von Ranke's History of the Popes* to the full, one needs to know how each is related to other essays; to enjoy *Mrs. Battle, The*

Daughter of Lebanon, or *Walking Tours* to the utmost, one needs to have definite impressions of Charles Lamb, of Thomas De Quincey, of Robert Louis Stevenson.

No further apology need be offered for a handbook of the English essay.

W. H. D.

October, 1916.

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"There is in him that which does not die; that Beauty and Earnestness of soul, that spirit of Humanity, of Love and mild Wisdom, over which the vicissitudes of mode have no sway. This is that excellence of the inmost nature which alone confers immortality on writings."

THOMAS CARLYLE: *Richter.*

ENGLISH ESSAYISTS

I. ORIGIN AND EARLY EXPONENTS

THE essay is, of course, not peculiarly the product of England. Writings resembling modern essays may be traced at least as far back as the *Epistles* of Seneca (died A. D. 65). And it was a modern Frenchman who first made use of the title Essays (*Essais*), who first gave to this type of literary composition a definite vogue, and who has been looked up to by English essayists as their literary father. This Frenchman, Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), may properly be considered the originator of the essay.

In 1571, under circumstances which he himself describes, Montaigne composed the earliest of his essays. In 1580, a volume of his essays was published at Bordeaux. Copies were undoubtedly soon conveyed to England. In 1603, an English translation appeared: William Shakespeare quite certainly possessed a copy. Bacon and later writers frequently refer to Montaigne. It is important, therefore, to observe the nature and the intentions of the man who hit upon this new and enduring kind of literary composition.

Superficially regarded, Montaigne was a well-educated gentleman of active intellect and facile pen, living

in retirement, and finding in the occupation of writing an interesting diversion. In his essay *Of Idleness,* he says:

"When I lately retired myself to my own house, with a resolution, as much as possibly I could, to avoid all manner of concern in affairs, and to spend in privacy and repose the little remainder of time I had to live, I fancied I could not more oblige my mind than to suffer it at full leisure to entertain and divert itself, which I hoped it might now the better be entrusted to do, as being by time and observation become more settled and mature; but I find,

'Veriam semper dant otia mentem.'

'E'en in the most retir'd estate
Leisure itself does various thoughts create:'

that, quite the contrary, it is like a horse having broken from his rider, who voluntarily runs into a much wilder career than any horseman would put him to, and creates me so many chimæras and fantastic monsters, one upon another, without order or design, that, the better at leisure to contemplate their strangeness and absurdity, I have begun to commit them to writing, hoping in time to make them ashamed of themselves."

More deeply considered, Montaigne was a man of singular independence of mind and singular frankness of disposition. He adopted as his motto, "Que sçais-je?", "What do I know?"; he refused to accept merely on the authority of others statements not verified by his own experience.

Emerson imagines Montaigne saying to himself:

"I stand here for truth, and will not, for all the states, and churches, and revenues, and personal reputations of Europe, overstate the dry fact, as I see it; I will rather

mumble and prose about what I certainly know,—my house and barns; my father, my wife, and my tenants; my old lean bald pate; my knives and forks; what meats I eat, and what drinks I prefer; and a hundred straws just as ridiculous,—than I will write, with a fine crow-quill, a fine romance. I like gray days, and autumn and winter weather. I am gray and autumnal myself, and I think an undress, and old shoes that do not pinch my feet, and old friends who do not constrain me, and plain topics where I do not need to strain myself and pump my brains, the most suitable."

And Emerson continues:

"The 'Essays,' therefore, are an entertaining soliloquy on every random topic that comes into his head; treating everything without ceremony, yet with masculine sense."

Emerson here expresses one quality of the essay as developed by Montaigne. Another important quality is pointedly expressed by Montaigne himself in his *Author to the Reader:*

"This, reader, is a book without guile. It tells thee, at the very outset, that I had no other end in putting it together but what was domestic and private. . . . It was intended for the particular use of my relations and friends, in order that, when they have lost me, which they must soon do, they may here find some traces of my quality and humor, and may therefore nourish a more entire and lively recollection of me . . . 'twas my wish to be seen in my simple, natural, and ordinary garb, without study or artifice, for 'twas myself I had to paint. . . . Thus, reader, thou perceivest I am myself the subject of my book. . . ."

The random nature of the topics treated, and the undisguised revelation of himself, are two striking char-

acteristics of Montaigne's essays. Two others are the marked extent to which he fortifies his opinions by examples and testimony from classical authors, and the aptness and general attractiveness of his writing.

Such, then, in brief, was the essay as it was first developed. It was not systematic in arrangement. It was not didactic, educational, in its purpose. It was in prose. It was not romance, although it included much that was narration. Each topic was treated briefly, not comprehensively. The impression left upon the reader was less of the subject discussed than of the man writing.

With comparatively insignificant variations, which may be noted as the essay is traced down the centuries, the type has persisted to the present day essentially as devised by Montaigne.[1]

FRANCIS, LORD BACON (1561-1626)

Chronology

1561 Born, January 22, London; son of Lord Keeper.

1573-1575 At Trinity College, Cambridge. 1575, to Gray's Inn.

1582 Barrister. 1584, elected to Parliament. Ambitious as a student; pecuniary troubles. Friendship with Earl of Essex.

1597 *Essays or Counsells, Civill and Morall* (10). Reprinted and enlarged, 1612 (38); 1625 (58). Betrayed Essex. Political activity. One of Queen's Learned Counsel.

1603 Accession of James. Bacon in favor.

[1] Montaigne's *Essais* were republished in 1588 and in 1596. Important translations since Florio's (1603) are one by Charles Cotton (1680); and one by William Hazlitt, son of the essayist (1841), a revision, merely, of Cotton's.

1605 *Advancement of Learning.* 1606, Solicitor General.
1613 Attorney General. Struggle with Coke over relative positions of judges and Crown.
1617 Lord Keeper. 1618, Lord Chancellor. Baron Verulam. Conducted prosecution of Raleigh.
1620 *Novum Organum.* 1621, Viscount St. Albans. Disclosures of bribery. Convicted. Fined, imprisoned. *History of Henry VII.*
1623 *Advancement of Learning* in Latin.
1625 Refused a pardon.
1626 Died, April 9, from exposure while conducting a scientific experiment.

The essays of Sir Francis Bacon are usually considered as belonging to the type of literature originated by Montaigne. It may readily be maintained that posterity has here been deceived by a name. The personal, the subjective element so marked in the case of "essays" is in Bacon insignificant.[1] Thought and expression alike in Bacon resemble the Book of Proverbs, the meditations of Marcus Aurelius, rather than the more or less whimsical, always flowing, seldom formal writing of other essayists. It appears that whereas Montaigne used the term *essai* in its

[1] A letter intended by him to serve as the Dedicatory Epistle to the 1612 edition contains the following: "To write just treatises, requireth leisure in the writer, and leisure in the reader, and therefore are not so fit, neither in regard of your highness's princely affairs, nor in regard of my continual service; which is the cause that hath made me choose to write certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously, which I have called Essays. The word is late, but the thing is ancient; for Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius, if you mark them well, are but essays, that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles."

original Latin sense of *exagium,* a weighing or balancing (his motto appeared beneath the device of a pair of scales), Bacon plainly used the term *essay* in the sense of experiment or trial, an essáy toward a complete treatment: he spoke of his essays as being not "just treatises," but "brief notes," as "dispersed meditations," that is, scattered thoughts. In so far, to be sure, as they "come home to men's business and bosoms" [1] and present things "whereof a man shall find much in experience, and little in books," [2] they do resemble Montaigne's. On the whole, however, Bacon's essays seem themselves to represent an original experiment in writing English, one of the experiments with the vernacular so common in Elizabethan times, an experiment of permanent value and significance, yet virtually unique in English literature, and not strictly belonging to the field of the English Essay.[3]

No book on the Essay, however, can as yet omit to treat of Francis Bacon.

Lord Bacon has four claims to greatness: his achievements as a statesman, his record as a philosopher and scientist, his work as a historian, and—a claim with which each of the others is closely connected—the writing of his *Essays or Counsells, Civill and Morall.*

[1] Dedication of 1625 Edition.
[2] Epistle referred to above.
[3] Cf. *The Rise of English Literary Prose,* by G. P. Krapp, Oxford University Press, 1915, the chapter on Bacon, pp. 535-541.

As an able son of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, Francis Bacon entered early upon public life. A barrister at twenty-one, he was elected to Parliament two years later. Some opposition which he offered to certain of Queen Elizabeth's plans, prevented the rapid rise to which his talents entitled him. He did become, in 1595, one of the Queen's Learned Counsel. In this capacity he conducted the successful prosecution of his friend and benefactor, the Earl of Essex, on trial for acts which Bacon had encouraged him to commit. But the Queen died without granting Bacon any signal favor.

Under James he rose gradually to the position of Lord Chancellor and was created Baron Verulam (1618). From the chancellorship he was deposed (1621), following his trial and conviction, before hostile judges, for bribery. The cause of his downfall is discoverable not only in his own acts, but in the growth of democratic sentiment in England. Bacon had persistently fought for intelligent exaltation of royal power above popular control in both Parliament and the courts. In so far as he was guilty, he had but conformed to a custom of the times. He had been imprudent but not base, he was less a culprit than a victim. As a statesman his conceptions were wise and his achievements noteworthy.

Throughout his life he had dearly cherished the thought of retiring on means sufficient to enable him to study and write. This he was never able to do. In all available intervals, however, he devoted himself to questions of philosophy and natural science.

He took "all knowledge for his province." And such were his insight and his foresight that he laid foundations in thought for inductive science, the first-hand observation and study of nature. He considered the accounts of life and of nature already existing as "pretty and probable conjectures." [1] As a means of securing "certain and demonstrable knowledge," he advocated the method which "derives axioms from the senses and particulars, rising by a gradual and unbroken ascent, so that it arrives at the most general actions last of all." [2] He was able to make only the crudest applications of the method; he died from exposure encountered while stuffing a fresh-killed chicken with snow in order to test the effect of cold as a preservative of animal tissues. But the method is that of Darwin and of all modern science.

As a historian his most important work is a *History of Henry VII,* written after his deposition. In accuracy, justice, and penetration it is of the highest rank. It is regrettable that his proposed History of Henry VIII was never written.

The experience of the statesman, the wisdom of the philosopher, the justice and expressiveness of the historian, find their confluence in Bacon's *Essays.* What in the first (1596) edition had been little more than rough accumulations of aphorisms—"fragments of his conceits," [3] in the later editions became more continuous and more rounded—"the best fruits, that

[1] *Novum Organum,* Preface.
[2] *Aphorisms,* xix.
[3] Dedicatory Epistle.

by the good increase which God gives to my pen and labors I could yield." They contain the ripest and wisest conclusions of his rich, active, comprehensive mind. In his own day, even, the *Essays,* to use his own words, "of all my other works have been most current." The expectation which he expressed (oddly enough!) concerning a Latin version of them, is likely to be fulfilled by the English version: it was, that they "may last as long as books last."

ABRAHAM COWLEY (1618-1667)

Chronology

1618 Born in London, son of a stationer. Fondness for *Faerie Queene.* Scholar in Westminster School.
1633 *Poeticall Blossoms,* five poems, published.
1637-1643 At Trinity College, Cambridge. Dramatic pieces. B. A., 1639; M. A., 1642; ejected, 1643; welcomed at Royalist Oxford, St. John's.
1646 Followed Queen to France. Diplomatic missions.
1647 *The Mistress,* favorite love-poems of the period.
1656 M. D. at Oxford.
1660 *Ode On the Blessed Restoration.* Member of the newly-founded Royal Society.
1665 Retired to Chertsey, Queen's lands.
1667 Died, July 28. Buried near Chaucer and Spenser in Westminster Abbey.
1668 *Several Discourses by Way of Essays in Verse and Prose.*

The generalizing, impersonal quality which marks Bacon's *Essays or Counsells* as outside the field of the English Essay, is not characteristic of Abraham Cowley's prose. He uses the term *Essays* (*Several Discourses by Way of Essays in Verse and Prose*)

as Bacon used it;[1] but his text is the intimate, direct, graceful chatting of an Anglicized Montaigne. And Cowley, notwithstanding the slender amount of his production in this form, should be regarded as the real father of the English Essay.

Like Montaigne's essays, Cowley's were probably not directly intended for public circulation. Like Montaigne's, they present the fruit of an active and varied life.

Abraham Cowley was the posthumous son of a London stationer. The striking feature of his childhood was his sustained fondness for Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. He was educated at Westminster School and at Trinity College, Cambridge. His *Poeticall Blossoms,* containing five poems, was published when he was only fifteen years old. He did some dramatic writing, moreover, in both English and Latin, at Cambridge, and took there the usual degrees.

Largely because of his Royalist inclinations he was ejected from the University in 1643, and took refuge in more conservative Oxford. In 1646 he joined the court of the fugitive Queen in France. From here he was sent on various diplomatic missions, one of them to England, where, still acting as a Royalist agent, he studied medicine at Oxford. Other poetical works had appeared at intervals, and the Restoration inspired still others, mostly in the form of Odes.

The opportunity for retirement, which even more genuinely than Bacon he seems long to have been

[1] The *Verse* consists of experiments—not of random soliloquies.

seeking, came at last. He secured a favorable lease of some of the Queen's lands in Chertsey, and went there in 1665 to live. At his death in 1667 he was thought worthy to lie beside Chaucer and Spenser in Westminster Abbey.

It was while at Chertsey that he wrote most of his eleven essays. "The last pieces that we have from his hands," says his biographer, Bishop Sprat, "are Discourses by Way of Essays upon some of the gravest subjects that concern the Contentment of a Virtuous Mind. These he intended as a real Character of his own thoughts, upon the point of his Retirement . . . an unfeigned Image of his Soul. . . ." He refers more than once in them to "Sieur Montagne," and it is plain that he follows Montaigne in independence of thought, in apt discursiveness, and in free use of passages from the ancient authors and of items from his own experience. He deserves wider recognition.

[Additional seventeenth-century essayists might be considered. One of them, John Dryden, wrote numerous critical prefaces which quite definitely prefigure certain essays of later authors. These writings of Dryden's, however, were invariably subordinate to the poetical or dramatic compositions which they accompanied; and he is allied in neither spirit nor method with the other recognized essayists. Though a major poet, dramatist, and prose writer, he is a minor essayist. With other minor essayists of different centuries, he will be found included in an alphabetical list at the end of the Handbook.]

II. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ESSAYISTS—PERIODICAL ESSAYS

STEELE AND ADDISON

Chronology

SIR RICHARD STEELE (1672-1729)

1672 Born, March 12, in Dublin.
1684 Entered Charterhouse School.
1689 Entered Christ's Church, Oxford.
1694 Left college; enlisted in Horse Guards.
1700 Made Captain. 1701, *The Christian Hero*—result of a duel.
1702 *The Funeral;* other plays.
1709 *The Tatler.* Appointed Gazetteer.
1711 *The Spectator.* Other periodicals subsequently.
1713 Entered Parliament. 1714, expelled from that body.
1715 Reentered Parliament and was knighted.
1718 Death of Lady Steele. 1726, retired to Wales.
1729 Died at Carmarthen, September 1.

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672-1719)

1672 Born, May 1, in Milston.
1686 Entered Charterhouse. 1687, Entered Queen's College, Oxford.
1693 M. A. Verses, scholarship.
1699-1703 Travel and study on the continent.
1704 *The Campaign.* Under-secretary of state.
1709 Contributed from Ireland to *The Tatler.*
1711-1714 *The Spectator.* 1713, *Cato.* Hostility of Alexander Pope.

1716 Married Countess of Warwick.
1717 Secretary of State with Lord Sunderland.
1719 Political dispute with Steele. Died, June 17.

THE essay as a type of literature owes little more to Montaigne and Cowley than it does to Steele and Addison. For these gifted and alert men erected the type out of obscurity into popularity, and thereby into what seems to be permanence. By presenting essays in the new and fortunate medium of periodical publications, by persistently bringing home the essay to the "business and bosoms" of men, and by giving to the form both superficial and pervading attractiveness, Steele and Addison instituted the golden age of the essay, so far as popularity is concerned, an age which essay-writers since then have dreamed of reviving, not of surpassing.

The widely known facts concerning the life of each writer may be swiftly rehearsed. And as Addison's senior by a few weeks, and as the actual originator of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator,* Steele deserves to be considered first. An analysis of what the two men accomplished in the field of the essay properly succeeds the brief account of their lives.

Richard Steele was born in Dublin, March 12, 1672. His father, a well-to-do Dublin attorney, died before Richard was five years old, his mother soon afterwards. At fourteen he was admitted to Charterhouse School in London, and here he formed the acquaintance and the friendship of Addison. Christ's

Church, Oxford, which he entered later, he left, without taking a degree, to become secretary to Lord Cutts and a captain in his regiment of the Horse Guards. Thackeray in *Henry Esmond* depicts with only slight exaggeration the Steele of this period, his chivalry and his good comradeship. The sterner side of his character appears in the active dislike for dueling which he conceived after having dangerously wounded his opponent in a conventional duel, and in his *Christian Hero,* which was prompted by this experience and was published in 1701.

The success of this work and of some occasional verse previously composed seems to have determined him for literature. Three plays, each almost frankly reformatory in purpose, he produced in turn. At length he received political recognition by being appointed Gazetteer, that is, editor of the government news organ. His first wife, whom he had married in 1703, died in 1706; the next year he married Miss Mary Scurlock of Carmarthen, Wales.

It was in 1709 that he established *The Tatler.* It ran until January 2, 1710-11, when the identity of its author had become known. *The Spectator* followed in 1711, and continued until 1713. In both he was assisted by Addison. Many similar and always short-lived literary ventures occupied Steele to the end of his active life. He was elected to Parliament in 1713, but the next year was convicted of seditious libel and expelled. He returned to favor under George I, was knighted by him, and again entered Parliament.

In 1718 Lady Steele died. A breach with Addi-

son, caused chiefly by political differences, widened as the years passed, and remained unhealed at Addison's death in 1719. In 1724 Steele retired from active life to his deceased wife's estate at Carmarthen, where on September 1, 1729, he died.

Joseph Addison was born May 1, 1672, in Milston. His father was later the dean of Lichfield Cathedral. Addison entered Charterhouse School, London, in 1686, and the next year went up to Oxford. He re-received an M.A. from Magdalen College in 1693. From 1698 to 1711 he held a fellowship. His verses, both in Latin and in English, won him great praise from Dryden, and one of his compositions brought a pension from the government. From 1699 to 1703 he traveled on the continent.

His first literary triumph was his poem, *The Campaign,* written at the request of the government in 1704 to celebrate the victory of Marlborough at Blenheim. In order to enlist on the side of the government the talents this poem displayed he was promptly made under-secretary of state. His literary reputation and skill, together with such controversial writings as he found occasion to produce, secured him many other remunerative public offices from time to time, and a liberal pension upon his retirement.

Addison was not at his best either as a controversialist or as a poet. His gentle ingenuity, his wide learning, his uprightness, and his quiet humor first found adequate expression in *The Tatler.* Addison was stationed in Ireland when this periodical was

established by Steele; but he recognized it as the work of his friend, and contributed to it more and more frequently as it progressed. To *The Spectator,* likewise started by Steele, he contributed even more papers than Steele himself.[1] He, of course, contributed to later periodicals also. His *Cato,* a play produced with notable success at Drury Lane Theatre in 1713, was an able dramatic venture; but his poems and his miscellaneous prose writings are insignificant in comparison with his essays.

His later life was embittered by two unfortunate quarrels. One was precipitated by Alexander Pope, who believed Addison guilty of conspiring to underrate his *Iliad.* Some of the bitterest lines in Pope's bitter *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* were directed at Addison.

The other break was with Steele. This was largely owing to political differences which Steele took no pains to minimize or repair. It seems to have been partly due to unfriendly rigor shown by Addison in collecting from Steele a loan of one thousand pounds. Addison died unreconciled. The calumny heaped upon him in these quarrels is in strong contrast to the praise expressed by the great body of his contemporaries.

In 1718 Addison retired on a pension. The next year, June 17, 1719, he died, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The Tatler, in which the essays of these men first appeared, was by no means the first of English period-

[1] Out of 555 papers, Steele wrote 236, Addison 274.

icals. Various ones had appeared and had been discontinued; and Daniel Defoe's *Review,* first published in 1704, was still being issued. Two things Steele seems to have learned directly from Defoe: the disadvantages of presenting merely news and political controversy, and the attractiveness inherent in questions of prevailing manners and morals. As the *Review* had reported the bald discussions of a certain "Scandalous Club," so in a kindlier, a more constructive spirit *The Tatler* presented, in letter form, the observations and cogitations of "an old man, a philosopher, a humorist, an astrologer, and a censor," who called himself Isaac Bickerstaff. The flexibility of the scheme is indicated by this statement in Number 1:

"All accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment, shall be under the article of White's Chocolate House; poetry, under that of Will's Coffee-house; learning, under the title of Grecian; foreign and domestic news, you will have from St. James's Coffee-house; and what else I have to offer on any subject shall be dated from my own apartment."

The nom de plume, Isaac Bickerstaff, was a well-chosen one for the prompt popularity of Steele's novel periodical. It was in the character of an astrologer by that name that Jonathan Swift had published in 1708 his *Predictions for the Year 1708,* a piercing satire on prognosticating almanac makers, particularly on one notorious hoax named John Partridge. It is worth while to add further details concerning this matter.

The very first of the "predictions" indulged in by Swift as Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., was that Partridge "will infallibly die upon the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever." Swift followed up the original prediction with an account, in an anonymous *Letter to a Person of Honor,* of the death of Partridge at "five minutes after seven, by which it is clear that Mr. Bickerstaff was mistaken almost four hours in his calculations." *A Vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq.,* also appeared, "proving" the said Partridge to be dead. Meanwhile Partridge had loudly protested the imposture of Bickerstaff, and the reality of his own continued fleshly existence.

The Tatler was thus launched upon a town convulsed with laughter and ready to devour anything bearing the name of the fictitious astrologer. "By this good fortune," as Steele wrote in the Dedication of the first volume of collected papers, "the name of Isaac Bickerstaff gained an audience of all who had any taste of wit"; and the initial success of the venture was assured.

The Tatler retained the attention of its audience. It circulated even to Ireland, where Addison recognized it as the work of Steele. Contributions from Addison, as well as from Dryden, Swift, and others, helped to maintain its popularity. And though the earlier of the two great essay-periodicals, it contains many of the best essays of each of the principal authors.

The Tatler was discontinued, however, with the 271st number. The reason for discontinuing it is

conveyed by what Steele over his own name wrote in this final issue:

"This work indeed has for some time been disagreeable to me, and the purpose of it wholly lost by my being so long understood as the author. . . . I shall not carry my humility so far as to call myself a vicious man, but at the same time must confess my life is at best but pardonable. And with no greater character than this a man would make at best but an indifferent progress in attacking prevailing and fashionable vices, which Mr. Bickerstaff has done with a freedom of spirit, that would have lost both its beauty and efficacy had it been pretended to by Mr. Steele."

In this final issue, and again in the preface to an edition of the papers in book form, Steele assigned to Addison the most generous credit for his assistance in the enterprise. And two months later, on March 1, 1711, the two friends issued the first number of *The Spectator.*

Many circumstances contributed to make *The Spectator* more widely read than *The Tatler.* Of course, it appealed directly to *The Tatler* audience at once, their appetites whetted, not appeased. The habit of reading, the expectation of finding pleasure in such reading, had spread. Then the Spectator, by declaring in his first paper his resolve "to observe an exact neutrality between the Whigs and Tories," placed his paper finally above the strife of parties. Furthermore, it appeared daily instead of thrice a week. And instead of having communications dated from different places, the Spectator served as the mouthpiece of "The Club," a group of seven in all, representing

virtually all classes of English reading society. The whole machinery of communications, of personal idiosyncrasies, of supposed places and times, available in *The Tatler,* was thus in *The Spectator* rendered sevenfold more flexible and responsive. Then, too, knowledge of its real authorship was less likely to turn the edge of its criticisms. Above all, the sustained wit, kindliness, and aptness of its papers served to extend its circulation and increase its effectiveness. It sold in what then seemed stupendous quantities, and its circulation even withstood a doubling of the price, made necessary by an increase in the tax on paper.

A work on such a basis naturally, however, could not continue indefinitely. The verisimilitude which gave it such charm made successive changes in The Club inevitable. Sir Roger could not live on for many years, nor Will Honeycomb continue single, nor the Templar be always an idler. The Club thus gradually dissolved, and holding out in Number 550 some hope of a reorganization, the series came to an end with Number 555, signed by Richard Steele, on December 6, 1712. The promoters promptly occupied themselves with *The Guardian.* But on June 18, 1714, *The Spectator* was revived by a Spectator now loquacious, instead of taciturn as before, and was continued for eighty numbers, one volume more, the only advertised reason being that the earlier series comprised an "odd number" of volumes!

Imitations had already sprung up thickly in London. Soon they were appearing in Scotland, in the

American Colonies, and in almost every country in Europe. By 1750 no less than 106 different English periodicals similar to *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* had appeared. By 1809, that is, within the space of one hundred years, the total had increased to 221.

There are, to be sure, few precise counterparts of these essay-periodicals among our current magazines; but various sections (Oldest Inhabitant, Easy Chair, Observer, Spectator, etc.) and frequent independent essays in our modern periodical publications daily proclaim how numerous and how interesting a progeny Defoe's Scandalous Club, Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., and The Spectator have begotten.

Thus by publishing essays in periodicals, Steele and Addison contributed immeasurably to the firm establishment of both essays and periodicals in English literature. The genius of each of these men deserves full recognition for the vogue given by them to the essay in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator.*

Yet the writings of these two men were widely read not only because they were brief and frequent, but because they were also apt and interesting. In a more literal sense than any that preceded them they dealt with things humanly important. They forsook the attitude, assumed by Montaigne's *Essais,* of being entirely of personal significance. They forsook the lofty, philosophizing attitude of Bacon, as also the timid, groping attitude of Cowley. The purpose of each periodical was reformatory. Steele stated it to be the general purpose of *The Tatler* "to expose the

false arts of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity, and affectation, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress, our discourse, and our behavior";[1] and again: "to recommend truth, innocence, honor, and virtue, as the chief ornaments of life."[2] *The Spectator* was no less definite. Writing with the hand of Addison he hopes that he may "contribute to the diversion or improvement of the country,"[3] and mentions his opportunity for "reprehending those vices which are too trivial for the chastisement of the law, and too fantastical for the cognizance of the pulpit."[4] The vices of political chicanery and partisanship, gambling and dueling, vanity and prudishness, hollow gallantry in place of courtesy, ignorance and pedantry—these were among the things against which the authors of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* set their faces and plied their ready pens.

And there is abundant testimony of their success. The poet, John Gay, their contemporary,[5] in his *Present State of Wit* (May, 1711), said:

"To give you my own thoughts of this gentleman's [*The Tatler's*] writings, I shall in the first place observe, that there is this noble difference between him and all the rest of our polite and gallant authors: the latter have endeavored to please the age by falling in with them, and encouraging them in their fashionable vices, and false notions of things. It would have been a jest some time since, for a man to have

[1] Dedicatory Epistle to first volume.
[2] See No. 271.
[3] Number 1.
[4] Number 34.
[5] Author of *Trivia,* in praise of city life, and of *The Beggars' Opera.*

asserted that anything witty could be said in praise of a married state; or that devotion and virtue were any necessary to the character of a fine gentleman. Bickerstaff ventured to tell the town that they were a parcel of fops, fools, and vain coquettes; but in such a manner, as even pleased them, and made them more than half inclined to believe that he spoke truth.

"Instead of complying with the false sentiments or vicious tastes of the age, either in morality, criticism, or good breeding; he has boldly assured them that they were altogether in the wrong, and commanded them, with an authority which perfectly well became him, to surrender themselves to his arguments for virtue and good sense.

"It is incredible to conceive the effect his writings have had on the town; how many thousand follies they have either quite vanished, or given a very great check to: how much countenance they have added to virtue and religion; how many people they have rendered happy, by showing them it was their own fault if they were not so; and lastly, how entirely they have convinced our fops and young fellows of the value and advantages of learning.

"He has indeed rescued it out of the hands of pedants and fools, and discovered the true method of making it amiable and lovely to all mankind. In the dress he gives it, it is the most welcome guest at tea tables and assemblies, and is relished and caressed by the merchants on the Change; accordingly, there is not a lady at court, nor a banker in Lombard Street, who is not verily persuaded, that Captain Steele is the greatest scholar and best casuist of any man in England.

"Lastly, his writings have set all our wits and men of letters upon a new way of thinking, of which they had little or no notion before; and though we cannot yet say that any of them have come up to the beauties of the original, I think we may venture to affirm, that every one of them

writes and thinks much more justly than they did some time since."

And Dr. Johnson, in his *Life of Addison,* testifies:

"*The Tatler* and *Spectator* . . . were published at a time when two parties, loud, restless, and violent, each with plausible declarations, and each perhaps without any distinct termination of its views, were agitating the nation; to minds heated with political contest, they supplied cooler and more inoffensive reflections; and it is said by Addison, in a subsequent work, that they had a perceptible influence upon the conversation of that time, and taught the frolic and the gay to unite merriment with decency."

The method and the purpose of these essays have alike proved native to the essay form. Addison and Steele to an extent barely conceived by Bacon brought the essay home to the "business and bosoms of men." And few worthy essays since their day have lacked the purpose of leading men pleasantly into saner thinking, more wholesome living.

The most striking contribution of Steele and Addison to the essay, however, was the lasting attractiveness which they gave it. The egotism which in self-painting by lesser men than Montaigne would have been repellent, is deftly made by Steele and Addison at once fictitious and amiable. Not even the very definite and usually very obvious lesson or moral attached to each essay could spoil the pleasing effect of the buoyant wit, fancy, and good sense which the essay contained. In form as well it was epoch-making. In these essays prose became, as never be-

fore, a ready and obedient instrument with a charm distinctly its own.

But these points the reader may and should develop from the essays themselves, from the actual writings of these two inventors and masterful exponents of the *periodical,* the *modern* essay.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709-1784)

Chronology

1709 Born, September 18, at Lichfield, son of a bookseller. Precocity. Infirmities, indolence.
1728 Entered Pembroke College, Oxford. Translations.
1735 Kept school at Lichfield. Garrick a pupil.
1737 Went with Garrick to London. Hack-writing. Grub Street.
1738 *London,* imitation of a Juvenal satire.
1744 *Life of Savage.*
1747-1755 *Dictionary.* Lord Chesterfield incident.
1749 *Vanity of Human Wishes,* poem. *Irene,* tragedy.
1750-1752 *The Rambler.* 1753-4, *Adventurer.* 1758-1760, *Idler* papers. Household and friends—Miss Williams, Francis Barbour, the Thrales.
1755 M.A. from Oxford.
1762 Pension of three hundred pounds.
1763 Boswell met Johnson. The Club organized.
1765 LL.D. from Dublin. Edition of Shakespeare.
1775 LL.D. from Oxford. *Tour of the Hebrides.* Conversation. Melancholy. Illnesses.
1784 Died, December 13. Buried in Westminster Abbey.
1791 *Life of Johnson,* by James Boswell.

The subject of Dr. Johnson is a large one. It must be treated here within the narrow limits imposed by

considering him as an essayist. As such he is noteworthy, not epoch-making.

The simple facts of his life are these: He was born September 18, 1709, the son of a bookseller in Lichfield. Poverty pursued him well into his middle life, and melancholy and indolence always beset him. His repulsive appearance and manners, moreover, tended to keep people away from him. But his extraordinary knowledge and wisdom and his skill as a talker attracted to his circle the finest spirits of his day.

Johnson attended Pembroke College for a time and later succeeded poorly as a teacher at Lichfield. With David Garrick, one of his pupils, he went to London in 1737 and found a residence and some hack-writing in Grub Street. His talents and his productions attracted such attention from the booksellers that ten years later (1747) he was entrusted with the task of compiling a comprehensive English dictionary, a task which despite his indolence he completed in the incredibly short time of eight years. It was in connection with this work that he wrote his famous letter to Lord Chesterfield, the great gentleman and literary patron of the day, spurning a tardy offer of assistance.

Meanwhile Johnson attempted periodical essays after the manner of *The Spectator*. *The Rambler,* 208 numbers entirely from his own pen, his numerous papers in Hawkesworth's *Adventurer,* and a series of papers in Newbery's *The Universal Chronicle* under the title of *The Idler,* all appeared between 1750 and 1760, and together firmly established Johnson's reputation as a critic and a moralist.

His *Rasselas,* a romance, was composed in the evenings of one week as a means of defraying the expenses of his mother's funeral. At last, in 1762, a government pension placed him in easy circumstances for life. The Club which he established the next year, with Burke, Reynolds, Garrick, and Goldsmith among its original nine members, is as famous in the history of real life as the Spectator Club in the realm of fiction.

Indolence and increasing melancholy combined to check his literary labors. He did *live* for Boswell, however, during these latter years, and furnished this matchless biographer with material for his great work. On December 13, 1784, Johnson died; he, like Addison, was buried in Westminster Abbey.

What of the significance of Dr. Johnson as an essayist? Two objects, both frankly proclaimed by Johnson in the final issue of *The Rambler,* each pursued with equal consistency in his other essays, he may be credited with attaining. The earlier essayists by their use of English prose as a literary medium had caused surprise; Johnson helped greatly to give final dignity to the form; he removed cause for surprise, and established English prose to such an extent that his century is almost barren of other forms. Furthermore, whereas Steele and Addison had made wisdom and virtue respectable, Johnson helped to make them the only respectable things to pursue.

Each of these contributions to the development of the essay deserves further consideration.

"I have labored," wrote Johnson, "to refine our language to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations. Something, perhaps, I have added to the elegance of its construction and something to the harmony of its cadence. When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I have familiarized the terms of philosophy by applying them to popular ideas, but have rarely admitted any word not authorized by former writers; for I believe that whoever knows the English tongue in its present extent will be able to express his thoughts without further help from other nations."

It was with the authority of the scholarly compiler of a great English dictionary that he wrote.

This confidence in the sufficiency of English, particularly of English prose, was far from universal. Although no writer since Bacon had consistently produced works in Latin as the "universal language," many of the greater writers since Milton had been skeptical of English as a lasting medium and had recommended means of forestalling its degeneration and decay. Johnson's confidence in English, it is true, depended partly on the attempted infusion of Latinism which his countrymen never fully accepted.[1] Johnson, too, it must be said, wavered in his confidence when at Goldsmith's death in 1774 he wrote Goldsmith's Westminster Abbey epitaph in Latin; but it is significant that virtually all of Johnson's friends protested against this disregard of the claims of English. Dr. Johnson once for all established the dignity

[1] Yet fictitious characters which in the earlier essays were given Latin names, were in his later essays given English ones.

of the English prose essay. And whereas Steele and Addison had employed the essay form fortuitously, able writers since Johnson have trained themselves as deliberately for essay-writing as for dramatic or poetical composition.

The other object avowed by Dr. Johnson is thus expressed in the final issue of *The Rambler:*

"I have seldom descended to the arts by which favor is obtained. I have seen the meteors of fashion rise and fall, without any attempt to add a moment to their duration. I have never complied with temporary curiosity, nor enabled my readers to discuss the topic of the day; I have rarely exemplified my assertions by living characters; in my papers no man could look for censures of his enemies or praises of himself; and they only are expected to peruse them, whose passions left them leisure for abstracted truth, and whom virtue could please by its naked dignity. . . . I shall never envy the honors which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardor to virtue, and confidence to truth."

Such boldness and integrity would have awakened only laughter at the beginning of the century. It is not too fantastic, perhaps, to trace the influence of Johnson's stand during the latter eighteenth century in the increasing genuineness and justness of literary criticism, in the growing dissatisfaction with corrupt politics, in the ever greater regard for the simple, the homely, the pure. Without some such change the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* would hardly have attracted readers of Gay's *Trivia, She Stoops to Conquer* the spectators of *The Beggars' Opera,* or *The Vicar of Wakefield* those who had fed upon

Pamela and *Tom Jones.* The Man in Black would without this change have appeared dull beside Sir Roger, and Beau Tibbs pallid indeed beside Will Honeycomb.

All the more because Johnson is not widely read, is not easy for most people to read, it should be recognized that of the qualities possessed by the great essay-treasures of the nineteenth century, two are in great measure contributed by him: the dignity and sufficiency of the English prose essay as a type, and the pervading and uniform exaltation of intellect and of soul.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728-1774)

Chronology

1728 Born, November 10, son of poor rector, Kilkenny West, Ireland. Thomas Byrne. Verses. Smallpox.

1744 Entered Trinity College, Dublin. B.A., 1749. Escapades.

1752 Edinburgh University, medicine.

1753 To Continent, Leyden University, travels.

1756 Returned to London. Physician, usher, hack-writer.

1759 *Enquiry into Present State of Polite Learning in Europe.*

1760 *Chinese Letters* in *Public Ledger;* 1762, *Citizen of the World.* Dr. Johnson. The Club.

1764 *The Traveller.* 1766, *Vicar of Wakefield.* 1767, *Good-Natured Man,* a comedy. 1770, *Deserted Village.* 1773, *She Stoops to Conquer.*

1774 *Retaliation*—mock epitaphs. Worry over indebtedness. Died, April 4. Latin epitaph in Westminster Abbey.

The many autobiographical passages in Goldsmith's works, together with Washington Irving's *Life of Goldsmith,* have made him almost as real a character as Dr. Johnson. Like Steele, Addison, and Dr. Johnson, he figures in nineteenth century historical fiction. Notwithstanding his insignificant form and homely features, and his impecunious, dallying, rather conceited nature, his hastily constructed writings steadily attract genuine interest and uniform praise. Many of the facts concerning him should be freshly in mind for the reader of his essays.

His father was a poor rector in central Ireland. There, one of a numerous family, Oliver Goldsmith was born, November 10, 1728. The character of his father is portrayed both in The Man in Black and in the Vicar of Wakefield. His surroundings in early life are reflected in *The Deserted Village.* Under a schoolmaster named Thomas or Paddy Byrne, he indulged and developed his natural taste for tales and verses. It was in childhood that he was disfigured by smallpox. His school days in various towns and his college days in Dublin were constantly enlivened by escapades resulting now from his generosity, now from his indolence or gullibility. He once mistook a private house for an inn, after the fashion described in *She Stoops to Conquer.* He composed ballads and had them sung in the streets in order to get money. Trinity College, now so proud of him as her son, was compelled by the vicissitudes of fate to discipline him more than once.

Receiving his A.B. in 1749, he spent three years in

idleness and uncertainty as to his choice of a profession. The tavern scene in *She Stoops to Conquer* doubtless reproduces some of his experiences during this period. At length he went to Edinburgh, in 1752, resolved to study medicine. The next year he managed to secure funds for prosecuting his studies on the Continent. He remained but a short time, however, at the University of Leyden before setting out on foot upon a tour of Europe. His experiences on this journey were utilized not only in his poem, *The Traveller,* but also in George Primrose's account of his adventures in *The Vicar of Wakefield.*

In 1756, penniless and unknown, he arrived in London. In turn he tried, both in vain, the profession of physician and the occupation of usher, or under-teacher, in a school. Finally he found employment as a hack-writer with Griffiths, the grasping publisher of the *Monthly Review,* and was inauspiciously launched upon his career.

An independent work published in 1759, and the appearance the next year in the *Public Ledger* of his *Chinese Letters,* brought him a somewhat larger income and the attention of literary men. He came to know Dr. Johnson, and was one of the original members of the famous Club.

A succession of productions, each dearly cherished to-day, and each quite popular in his day, appeared during the next fourteen years. During the same time he compiled numerous and remunerative works for the booksellers. He had many friends. But he spent more rapidly than he earned. And when the

struggle and worry made him ill, he—whom others had all along refused to patronize as a physician—insisted upon dosing himself. He died, April 4, 1774, at the age of only forty-six.

His indebtedness proved to be so disgracefully large that a proposal to bury him in Westminster Abbey had to be abandoned. An inscription, written (notwithstanding the protests of Burke, Reynolds, and others) in Latin, by Dr. Johnson, was nevertheless set up in the Abbey. It contains the pregnant phrase:

"Nullum tetigit quod non ornavit."
"He touched nothing which he did not adorn."

Goldsmith's *Chinese Letters* were reprinted as *The Citizen of the World.* This work consists of one hundred and twenty-three letters, ostensibly from an educated "Chinese" or Chinaman sojourning in England. They are essays as distinctly as Steele's *Tatler* papers. The fiction in them is rather inconsistently maintained, but the point of view is highly illuminating. The Chinese visits many of the places which Bickerstaff, the Spectator, the Rambler, and others had in turn visited. And from every place and incident he derives entertainment and profit. In humor and kindliness, and for the most part in realism, his letters surpass the lucubrations and meditations of them all.

Other essays of Goldsmith's are contained in *The Bee,* a periodical issued from October 6, 1759, to November 24, 1759. These papers are as varied in subject-matter and in treatment as those of *The Spectator* and *The Rambler.*

Goldsmith was not above all an essayist. He and his contemporaries alike doubtless regarded his essays as inferior in worth to his poems, his comedies, and his novel. He is an essayist, however, who may well be placed at the head of those who set out merely to follow in the footsteps of Addison and Steele. And as Dr. Johnson contributed to the development of the type by giving it breadth and sturdiness, so Goldsmith, as his essay-writings will show to the reader, helped to perfect and establish the essay by giving it complementary qualities of grace, intimacy and humanness.

The things which Steele and Addison, Johnson, and Goldsmith as essayists did well were done either as well or quite indifferently by numerous other writers of the century. (See alphabetical list in Appendix.) These writers added little, however, to the essay forms and traditions. The essay heritage left by the eighteenth century was essentially that contributed by Montaigne, Bacon and Cowley, and by the four great writers of the periodical essays: Steele and Addison, Johnson, and Goldsmith. These men prepared the way for the production and circulation of essays, unexampled in number and variety, among the ever-increasing reading public of the nineteenth century.

III. NINETEENTH CENTURY ESSAYISTS—ENGLISH AND AMERICAN

CHARLES LAMB (1775-1834)

Chronology

1775 Born, February 10, in Crown Office Row, The Temple, London.
1782-1789 Attended Christ's Hospital, charity school.
1792 Appointed clerk in South Sea House; 1795, in East India Co.
1796 Sister, Mary, in fit of insanity, killed mother. Lamb published four sonnets in book of verse mostly by Coleridge.
1796-1820 Published at intervals verse, tales, dramas, and criticisms; collected *Works* issued, 1818.
1820-1823 *Elia Essays* in *London Magazine;* in book form, 1823.
1825 Retired from clerkship on pension.
1833 *Last Essays of Elia,* book form.
1834 Death.
(1847 Death of Mary.)

DURING the first thirty years of the nineteenth century an inhabitant of the section of London known as Islington might many times have seen walking toward a certain institution well known in the neighborhood, two persons, a man and a woman, neatly and simply clothed in black, both weeping bitterly; with one arm the man supported the woman, and

under the other arm he carried a strait-jacket. It was Mary Lamb, conscious of an approaching attack of insanity, being conducted to the madhouse by her brother Charles. On the 22nd of September, 1796, in the first of her paroxysms, Charles had been unable to wrest a knife from Mary's hand before she had murdered their mother. He had subsequently secured her release from custody by promising the civil authorities to watch over her; and another time had now come when she must be placed under restraint.

This somewhat lurid picture needs early mention because it brings into proper relief the charm, the pathos, and the heroism of Lamb's writings. Mary Lamb's recurring illness, too, was not the only encouragement to misanthropy which in 1800, at the age of twenty-five, Charles Lamb had to withstand. He was under-sized. He was afflicted with a mortifying stutter. The impecuniousness of his father, a humble clerk to a lawyer in the Inner Temple, had compelled Charles to leave the Blue Coat (charity) School which he had been attending and to accept a position in the South Sea House, later a similar one with the East India Company, where he earned a small salary as a copyist clerk. He had met Ann Simons near his grandmother's home in the country and had loved her; it was more than a passing fancy, for when she had not reciprocated and had become Mrs. Bartram instead, he had had to be confined for a short time in an asylum himself. He had a selfish brother who refused to shoulder any of the respon-

sibilities of the family. Death had recently robbed the family of other cherished members in addition to the murdered mother. When his friend Lloyd had tried to cheer Lamb by keeping him away from Mary's side, Lamb had abruptly broken with Lloyd. His only real friend, the companion of his school days, the poet Coleridge, was a long journey from London.

One night in the loneliness of his lodgings, as he awaited the temporary oblivion of the next day's drudgery, he put out of sight the sonnets and the blank verse with which he had been toying, and wrote:

"Where are they gone, the old familiar faces?
I had a mother, but she died, and left me,
Died prematurely in a day of horrors—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

"I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

"I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

"I loved a love once, fairest among women.
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

"I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man.
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

"Ghost-like, I paced round the haunts of my childhood.
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

"Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother!
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

"For some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some they have taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces."

And yet the Lamb of this broken-hearted lamentation is not the Lamb of English literature. Misanthropy, morbidity, tragedy, pathos even—despite the encouragement to each which his life furnished—are not the qualities for which men turn and turn again to the *Essays of Elia,* the *Letters,* and the other works of Charles Lamb. The mood which expressed itself in a sad lament was a rare one with him. What, in 1800, during the hours when he is not transcribing items about muslin, cutlery, and calico, is he ordinarily doing? Well, he is smoking, for one thing; like most Englishmen of his time, he is also drinking—something hot and probably rather strong; he is reading voraciously and lovingly all the books which he can afford to buy containing seventeenth century prose, poetry, and drama; and (perhaps as a means of supplying tobacco, toddy, and books) he is writing *jokes* for the newspapers!

A few samples of the labored facetiousness with which in 1802 young Lamb held at bay the dogs of loneliness and sorrow will not be out of place. As Elia in his *Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago,* he explains that every morning paper kept an author to provide daily certain witty paragraphs at sixpence a joke, and that he was accustomed to rise early each

morning throughout the year, "the only time we could spare for this manufactory of jokes—our supplementary livelihood, that supplied us in every want beyond mere bread and cheese."

Referring to a fashion then current of wearing pink hose, he quotes fondly in this same essay one of his paragraphs in which

"allusively to the flight of Astrea—*ultima cœlestium terras reliquit*—we pronounced . . . that MODESTY, TAKING HER FINAL LEAVE OF MORTALS, HER LAST BLUSH WAS VISIBLE IN HER ASCENT TO THE HEAVENS BY THE TRACT OF HER GLOWING INSTEP."

Mr. E. V. Lucas, Lamb's modern biographer, has discovered further paragraphs as follows:

"The *roseate tint,* so agreeably diffused through the silk stockings of our females, induces the belief that the *dye is cast* for their lovers."

"The decline of red stockings is as fatal to the wits, as the going out of fashion to an overstocked jeweller; some of these gentry have literally for some months past *fed* on *roses.*"

"*Mr. Monk Lewis* was so much hurt by his fall, that, we are told, he continued for some minutes *senseless. Very probable.*"

"We find in the weekly account of clerical promotions that the Rev. Mr. *Sheepshanks* succeeds Dr. *Mereweather* in the Rectory of *Bleating.*"

"A *bench* of Justices certainly gives us an idea of something *wooden.* Shakespeare, in his seven ages, represents a Justice as made up with saws, etc."

"The poets have always been lovers of good liquor from

Anacreon and Ben Jonson downwards; hence they are sometimes termed in derision *dram*-atists."

"Half a dozen jests a day," says Elia further in the *Newspapers* essay, "why, it seems nothing! We make twice the number every day in our lives as a matter of course." Lamb did, at any rate. In the gatherings of literary people, players, wits, and eccentric individuals at the Lambs'—including Coleridge, De Quincey, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Hunt, and once even Carlyle—Lamb was known chiefly as a maker of small jokes and puns. De Quincey thus describes his method:

"Lamb said little except when an opening arose for a pun. And how effectual that sort of small shot was from *him* I need not say to anybody who remembers his infirmity of stammering, and his dexterous management of it for purposes of light and shade. He was often able to train the roll of stammers into settling upon the words immediately preceding the effective one; by which means the keynote of the jest or sarcasm, benefiting by the sudden liberation of his embargoed voice, was delivered with the force of a pistol shot. That stammer was worth an annuity to him as an ally of his wit. Firing under cover of that advantage, he did triple execution; for, in the first place, the distressing sympathy of the hearers with *his* distress of utterance won for him the silence of deep attention; and then, whilst he had us all hoaxed into this attitude of mute suspense by an appearance of distress that he perhaps did not really feel, down came the plunging shot into the very thick of us, with ten times the effect it would else have had."

"M-martin," he once blurted out to his friend Burney at the whist table, "if d-dirt were trumps, wh-what

a h-h-hand you would hold." In introducing his sister to Hood, he obviously desired to turn aside any effusion of compliments: "My sister Mary," he said. "Allow me to introduce my sister Mary; she is a very good woman, but she d-d-drinks!" After Wordsworth had been expressing some rather pompous, non-adulatory criticism of Shakespeare, Lamb burst in with: "Here's Wordsworth, he says he could have written *Hamlet* himself, if he only had the m-m-mind!" When reference was made to the fact that he often went late to his work at the South Sea House, Lamb replied: "True; but I always make up for it by going home early." "Charles, did you ever hear me preach?" Coleridge once said to him. "I never heard you do anything else," Lamb answered. In recounting amidst his trials the many blessings which he enjoyed he declared that "The wind is tempered to the shorn Lambs." His landlord, so he said, had retired on forty pounds a year *and one anecdote.*

On a certain occasion when he had dined with his physician, he had been carried home by a servant. Next morning he wrote:

"My sister has begged me to write an apology to Mrs. A. and you for disgracing your party. Now, it does seem to me that I had rather honored your party, for every one that was not drunk (and one or two of the ladies, I am sure, were not) must have been set off greatly in contrast to me. I was the scapegoat. The soberer they seemed. . . . But still you will say (or the men and maids at your house will say) that it is not a seemly sight for an old gentleman to go home pick-a-back. Well, maybe it is not. But I never studied grace. I take it to be a merely superficial accom-

plishment. I regard more the internal acquisitions. The great object after supper is to get home, and whether that is obtained in a horizontal posture or perpendicular (as foolish men and apes affect for dignity) I think is little to the purpose. . . . Here I am, able to compose a sensible, rational apology, and what signifies how I got here?"

"Insuperable proclivity to gin in poor old Lamb. His talk contemptibly small, indicating wondrous ignorance and shallowness, even when it was serious and good-mannered, which it seldom was," with only "a most slender fiber of actual worth . . . in that poor Charles . . . in his better times and moods." This was what gigantic, serious, thundering Carlyle thought of Lamb—"a nondescript and harmlessly useless" sort of genius. Hazlitt, who knew Lamb better and whose world-spectacles were in general more carefully polished, imputed Lamb's puns and light talk to his humility and his desire to be agreeable: "Lamb often had wiser things to say than he would utter, but, fearing perhaps that he might go beyond the apprehension of certain of the company and make them uncomfortable, he preferred to maintain a lower and friendlier level by indulging in nonsense." Doubtless it was as Professor Winchester says: "Just because life was to him so serious a matter, he took delight in upsetting those people who are always mistaking stupidity for seriousness and dulness for dignity." [1]

Such in brief was the life, and such the spirit of Charles Lamb: to those who did not or could not

[1] C. T. Winchester: *A Group of English Essayists,* New York, 1910.

know him, something of a buffoon, something even of an imbecile; to those, on the other hand, who knew him well, in a high and difficult sense heroic. The most intimate revelations of his life, written in its ripest period, are what one reads in the *Essays of Elia.* Before opening a copy of them, fix vividly in mind a picture of the author. Think of him proceeding daily to his high stool and his pen, those certain providers of bread and cheese, at the South Sea House or the East India Company's offices; think of him returning at night to his simple home and his loving sister to enjoy a smoky, bibulous, jolly evening with his friends. Think of him contriving from time to time to compose an Elia essay—now an extended pun like *April Fools' Day,* now an effusion like the *Roast Pig* dissertation. Think of him in franker moments writing such a heart-piercing reverie as *Dream-Children,* where he describes how his little ones, little Alice and sturdy John, had crept about him one evening to hear stories about their elders, and how, after telling them of their grandmother and of his own boyhood, he had continued:

"Then I told them how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing

at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: 'We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice called Bartrum father. We are nothing, less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name'—and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side. . . ."

Think also of Lamb saving, in excess of what tobacco and gin and frequent entertaining must have cost, two thousand pounds sterling as a legacy for Mary and a support in her old age. Think of him in person as he is described by Carlyle, who, notwithstanding his bruskness and his squinting vision, has left us the most lifelike and, in its essence, the most appreciative picture of Charles Lamb:

"He was the *leanest* of mankind, tiny black breeches buttoned to the knee-cap and no farther, surmounting spindle-legs also in black, face and head fineish, black, bony, lean, and of a Jew type rather; in the eyes a kind of *smoky* brightness or confused sharpness; spoke with a stutter; in walking tottered and shuffled: emblem of imbecility bodily and spiritual (something of real *insanity* I have understood), and yet something too of humane, ingenuous, pathetic, sportfully much-enduring."

Finally, modify this picture to the extent suggested by Mr. Augustine Birrell:

"One grows sick of the expressions, 'poor Charles Lamb,' 'gentle Charles Lamb,' as if he were one of those grown-up

children of the Leigh Hunt type, who are perpetually begging and borrowing through the round of every man's acquaintance. Charles Lamb earned his own living, paid his own way, was the helper, not the helped; a man who was beholden to no one, who always came with gifts in his hand, a shrewd man, capable of advice, strong in council. Poor Lamb, indeed! Poor Coleridge, robbed of his will; poor Wordsworth, devoured by his own *ego;* poor Southey, writing his tomes and deeming himself a classic; poor Carlyle, with his nine volumes of memoirs, where he

> 'Lies like a hedgehog rolled up the wrong way,
> Tormenting himself with his prickles'—

Call these men poor, if you feel it decent to do so, but not Lamb, who was rich in all that makes life valuable or memory sweet."

Then pick up your copy of Lamb's essays, and read.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778-1830)

Chronology

1778 Born at Maidstone, Kent, son of Presbyterian minister.

1783-1786 With family in America—Philadelphia, Weymouth.

1794 Controversial letters, political, ethical.

1798 Visit of Coleridge. Hazlitt visited Coleridge and met Wordsworth. Home reading and study. Painting—portraits of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb.

1806 *Principles of Human Action,* "an Argument in defense of the Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind."

1812 Parliamentary newspaper reporter; theatrical critic; quarrel with editor.

1817 *Round Table* essays in Hunt's *Examiner.* Quarrel with the Lambs. *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays.* Quarrel with Gifford of the *Quarterly Review.* Lectures, books.
1819 *Table Talk* in *London Magazine.* Quarrels with Hunt, Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth.
1825 *Spirit of the Age* (critical estimates of contemporaries).
1826 *Plain Speaker.* 1827, *Life of Napoleon.*
1830 Died, September 18.

It is not particularly difficult to regard Charles Lamb as a hero; there is so much that is thrillingly virile in his life that that "proclivity to gin," that never-ceasing levity, and those horrible puns constitute blemishes at once amiable and insignificant. It is harder to erect a pedestal for William Hazlitt. It does not predispose us in his favor to learn, as facts compel us to learn of Hazlitt, that he was suspicious and quarrelsome with respect to his friends; that he was bitterly, almost vulgarly, vituperative toward his enemies; that he was heartless, even inhuman, in his love affairs; and that his bigotry, in politics and religion alike, was almost incredible—he boasted that he had never read a book through after he was thirty.

And yet Carlyle, always so sparing with his praise, called Hazlitt "a man recognizably of fine natural talents and aspirations"; Robert Louis Stevenson confessed himself an ardent "Hazlittite," and considered Hazlitt the most improperly neglected of English writers; Walter Bagehot actually preferred Hazlitt to Lamb; and Charles Lamb himself wrote of Hazlitt

in the *London Magazine* this qualified yet practically unsparing praise: "But protesting against much that he has written and some things which he chooses to do; judging him by his conversation, which I enjoyed so long and relished so deeply, or by his books, in those places where no clouding passion intervenes, I should belie my own conscience if I said less than that I think W. H. to be in his natural and healthy state one of the wisest and finest spirits breathing. . . . I think I shall go to my grave without finding, or expecting to find, such another companion."

These opinions are enough to create for William Hazlitt a niche well above the group of authors who are merely notable. They serve, moreover, to convert one's study of his life from what would otherwise be a search for scandalous and putrid morsels, into a discriminating scrutiny of those things which kept him from being more heroic than he was, and of those other things which notwithstanding inheritance and environment and innate perversity made him truly memorable.

For some of the influences which made Hazlitt unhealthy and unheroic, we must look to the times into which he was born. The eighteenth century was dominated by a spirit of conformity. In religion the emphasis was upon the doctrines of the Established Church, at least upon the beliefs which had been handed down and which for that reason had a final claim upon men's faith. Dr. Samuel Johnson exercised his great intellect not in critically examining

these doctrines but in compelling himself to adopt them. In criticism, the effort was constantly to establish final criteria, and it was customary to regard works which did not conform to recognized criteria as *ipso facto* damned to contempt and oblivion. In politics, also, established principles were the prime things to be sought and to be regarded: Burke would probably not have favored the American Colonies as he did, had not his view been dictated by precedent; and when Burke could find nothing in his principles or his knowledge of the past to explain the French Revolution, he maintained that it was absolutely without justification, altogether misdirected and inexcusable, and he recognized in the treatment of King Louis and Queen Marie Antoinette only the height of tragedy, pathos, and unchivalry.

Before Hazlitt was born, a reaction had set in which continued during all his early life. The preaching of the two Wesleys compelled many people to recognize that religion included far more than the acceptance of articles and the observance of forms. Benjamin Franklin had dared to think about such matters for himself, and to let others know that he did so. In literature, Robert Burns sang songs which notwithstanding theory and criteria and learned discussion as to what ought to be, made men listen to what *was*. Wordsworth and Coleridge promptly followed with theories and productions which must have made Dryden and Gray and Dr. Johnson turn uneasily in their graves. Even in politics, although the excesses of the Revolutionists in France and the animosity necessarily

occasioned by the successful rebellion in America only confirmed multitudes of reactionaries in their opinions —even in politics, there were not a few who welcomed the new as *good,* and, regardless of what they thought to be false patriotism, sympathized openly with the Colonies and rejoiced in the French Revolution.

In the family of one of the most ardent of these progressives, a son, William Hazlitt, was born in 1778. His father had been educated as a Presbyterian minister: he was something of a Dissenter to begin with. But he had dissented even from that denomination, and had joined what was then the small and despised sect of the Unitarians. He had often met and conversed with Dr. Benjamin Franklin, then on important missions from the Colonies to the mother country. And when times were not prosperous in his small Unitarian church, he came, in 1783, to America. If the new nation had proved as unconventional in religion as it had proved in politics, Hazlitt would doubtless be to-day regarded as an insignificant or an honored American author. But Philadelphia, where the family first settled, was too orthodox to pay much attention to this intellectual rebel, Hazlitt's father; later Boston, although it proved more hospitable and allowed Mr. Hazlitt to walk in from his temporary home in Weymouth and found the first Unitarian society in Boston, could not provide him with a decent living; and in 1786 the Hazlitt family returned to a Unitarian parish in Wem, Shropshire, where conditions were meager but endurable. And there, in an

atmosphere of religious and political dissent, Hazlitt grew up.

Carlyle attributed Hazlitt's ill-success in the conduct of his life to his lack of "sound culture." Probably Carlyle felt that the studies Hazlitt had prosecuted under his father's guidance and at his own sweet will there in Wem, although persistent indeed, were desultory and ill-balanced. For, intending his son to become a Unitarian minister, the elder Hazlitt directed him in a vast amount of theological and controversial reading. And of his own accord Hazlitt read assiduously and repeatedly from Burke, Junius, Rousseau, Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, Shakespeare, and Boccaccio. The only immediate result was that gradually he crystallized his opinions, usually unconventional ones, on this subject and on that. Certain controversial letters written by him were published before he was sixteen. He watched with admiration the progress of the French Revolution, and noted rapturously the rise and the triumphal course of Napoleon.

In 1796, Coleridge came to preach at Wem. His sermon and his conversation at the Hazlitt home and on the walks which he condescendingly took with William, startled the young thinker in his contemplative inactivity. Hazlitt began to feel that his thoughts might be worth something, and that he too might some day write things which men would gladly read and act upon. He visited Coleridge later in the Lake Country, and there met Wordsworth. It was somewhat as if a youthful student of to-day should

by some combination of circumstances become the intimate companion for three or four weeks of Mr. Edwin Arlington Robinson and Mr. Alfred Noyes. Hazlitt wanted to write; thoughts surged in his mind; but his stubborn pen would not express them. Still he studied, the works of his old author-friends, the poetry of Coleridge and Wordsworth, his empirical theories of justice and human conduct; he accumulated that store of knowledge and experience which was to flow so freely in later years, but which as yet would not be organized upon any set theme. In one place he speaks of these days as the saddest of his life, in another place as the happiest.

At last he gave up thoughts of being a man of letters, and undertook to develop another taste which he had long exhibited. His older brother, John, was a miniature-painter. William began to take lessons in painting. At length he secured orders for copies of certain pictures in the Louvre, and spent several months in 1802-1803 in Paris filling them. He returned to England as a portrait-painter; of his works the most important is a picture of Charles Lamb which is in the National Gallery in London. But it was his ambition to depict character as accurately and as artistically as Rembrandt, and his prompt and frank recognition that his limited talents made this impossible is surely to his credit. In 1805 he abandoned the profession.

He had already met Charles Lamb and other literary men in London. These and other experiences seem to have partly unshackled his pen, for in 1806

his first book, containing his long-contemplated philosophical scheme, appeared. It met with no success. It did bring him some hack work from the London publishers. He had had various love affairs since his first departure from Wem; these now, in 1808, culminated in his wedding with a Miss Stoddart, a friend of the Lambs. In 1812, after a period of comparative inactivity, reflected in his later works through accounts of strolls in the woods near his cottage at Winterslow, he moved with his family to London, determined to make his living there as a literary man.

He became Parliamentary reporter for the *Morning Chronicle,* acquired from his associates the habit of drinking to excess, came to his senses, and foreswore liquor forever. He became a theatrical critic. He quarreled—as he was soon to quarrel with the friends whom he should have cherished most—with the editor of the paper, and resigned his position.

At last he was to strike his best vein. Leigh Hunt conceived the idea of conducting a paper which should contain essays in the manner of *The Spectator;* different writers were to contribute, and the series was to be known as the *Round Table.* Just as the undertaking was launched, however, the renewed activity of Bonaparte, whose defeat at Waterloo had chagrined and embittered Hazlitt, spread consternation in London; and Hazlitt wrote all of the *Round Table* papers which were published, except a few by Hunt himself. The choice accumulations of years here found their proper outlet.

Hazlitt admired Montaigne for his "courage to say

as an author what he felt as a man." Hazlitt always had an opinion—favorable *almost* as frequently as adverse; and he proved to be neither priggish nor insipid in stating his opinions. He allowed to appear not only the admirations which he had long cherished for certain authors and certain painters, but also his political and his religious principles and animosities. To have been more tactful, less frank and outspoken, would to his mind have been to desert his principles, his conscience.

One effect was that he was attacked by the staunch Tory, Gifford, who edited the *Quarterly Review.* A sample of Gifford's criticism will be enlightening here:

"We are far from intending to write a single word in answer to this loathsome trash . . . but if the creature in his endeavor to crawl into the light must take his way over the tombs of illustrious men, disfiguring the records of their greatness with the slime and filth which marks his track, it is right to point out to him that he may be flung back to the situation in which Nature designed that he should grovel."

Hazlitt nourished his resentment in silence until after the appearance of his next work, *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays,* the ready sale of which was suddenly checked by another foul attack from Gifford. Hazlitt then prepared and published a *Letter to William Gifford, Esq.,* which for virulence and force, if not for conciseness and dignity, may be compared to Dr. Johnson's famous letter to Lord Chesterfield. It begins:

"Sir,—You have an ugly trick of saying what is not true of any one you do not like; and it will be the object of this

letter to cure you of it. You say what you please of others: it is time you were told what you are. In doing this, give me leave to borrow the familiarity of your style:—for the fidelity of the picture I shall be answerable.

"You are a little person, but a considerable cat's-paw; and so far worthy of notice."

One of Hazlitt's essays is entitled *The Pleasures of Hating;* and surely no man to whom hatred was not a joy could have contracted or have cherished so many enmities as this man. He quarreled with Lamb; he fought with all critics like Gifford who attacked him or the objects of his admiration, considering each not merely mistaken or misinformed, but deliberately blind, maliciously mendacious, altogether contemptible. His criticisms of Shelley, whom he could not endure, in *Table Talk,* caused a breach with Leigh Hunt. He also made bitter attacks upon Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth.

The rosebushes of his essays are well supplied with thorns. Observe this footnote to an account of old English writers:

"A splendid edition of Goldsmith has been lately got up under the superintendance of Mr. Washington Irvine, with a preface and a portrait of each author. By what concatenation of ideas that gentleman arrived at the necessity of placing his own portrait before a collection of Goldsmith's works, one must have been early imprisoned in transatlantic solitudes to understand."

Here are some more of his barbed thrusts:

"This last-mentioned player is at present the keeper of the Fives-court, and we might recommend to him for a motto

over his door, 'who enters here, forgets himself, his country, and his friends.' And the best of it is, that by the calculation of the odds, none of the three are worth remembering!"

"Now Cavanaugh [a celebrated Fives player] was as good-looking a man as the Noble Lord and much better looking than the Right Hon. Secretary. He had a clear, open countenance, and did not look sideways or down, like Mr. Murray, the bookseller."

"A rich man is not a great man, except to his dependants and his steward. A lord is a great man in the idea we have of his ancestry, and probably of himself, if we know nothing of him but his title."

"If we wish to know the force of human genius we should read Shakespeare. If we wish to see the insignificance of human learning we may study his commentators."

If he did not quarrel with his wife, he did exhibit gross indifference toward her, and that from the standpoint of each must have been worse than quarreling; after 1819 they lived apart. By 1822 he had become infatuated with the daughter of his landlord, a Miss Walker; and he and Mrs. Hazlitt went together to Scotland, where divorce seemed to be more easily obtainable than in England. On his return to London, a single man, as he thought, Hazlitt found Miss Walker about to be married to a man of her own station. He threw off a naked account of his passion for her, published it, forgot her, and two years later married a Mrs. Bridgewater, of whom we know simply that she had three hundred pounds a year. When she discovered shortly afterward, while Hazlitt was tour-

ing the Continent (on her money), that their marriage was after all bigamous, the Scotch divorce not being really legal, she refused to return to Hazlitt, and he never saw her again.

Yet this bright, quarrelsome, fickle man, on his deathbed in 1830, waiting for the fifty pounds which he had requested Jeffrey to send him for medicine, gruel, and nurse's fees—this man, rich only in friends who, like Charles Lamb, would not remain estranged from him, says what of himself in his last moments?

"Well, I have lived a happy life!"

There is every reason to believe that he was not delirious when he said it.

To understand that remark we must turn away from his life, agreeing here with Carlyle when he says "Poor Hazlitt!" We must turn to his miscellaneous writings—not to the unfortunate *Life of Napoleon,* which could not have displaced in popular favor the one that had just been published by Sir Walter Scott, and which, moreover, made a hero of the man with whose name English mothers had long been frightening their children into obedience; we must turn not to the scurrilous Gifford attacks, not to the pseudo-philosophical and "scrupulously dry" treatise on *Human Action:* but to the intimate, reflective, self-revealing, eloquent effusions of the *Round Table, Table Talk,* and the *Plain Speaker.* Sauntering in these fragrant and luxuriant gardens, we shall see why Stevenson kept Hazlitt always beside him, why Hazlitt is called the most eloquent of essayists, why so

intelligent a man as Walter Bagehot could prefer Hazlitt even to Lamb, and why Charles Lamb could say of Hazlitt that "in his natural and healthy state" he was "one of the wisest and finest spirits breathing."

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783-1859)

Chronology

1783 Born, April 3, New York.
1802 *Jonathan Oldstyle Papers* in local newspaper.
1804-1806 First European trip, health and pleasure.
1806 *Salmagundi.*
1809 *Knickerbocker History of New York.* Death of his fiancée, Miss Hoffman.
1815-1832 Second European sojourn; business, literature.
1819 *The Sketch Book.* 1822, *Bracebridge Hall.* 1824, *Tales of a Traveller.* 1828, *Life of Columbus.*
1833 Sunnyside purchased.
1842 Visit of Charles Dickens.
1842-1846 Minister to Spain.
1855 *Wolfert's Roost.* 1855-1859, *Life of Washington.*
1859 Died, November 29.

One day in the 1820's, so a well-authenticated story runs, an English lady and her daughter, passing through an art gallery in Italy, paused before a bust of Washington.

"Who was Washington, mamma?" said the daughter.

"Why, my dear, don't you know!" her mother replied. "He wrote the *Sketch Book.*"

This anecdote reminds one of three significant things. In the first place, the author of the *Sketch Book* was really named for the great American general,

had been seen and blessed by George Washington, and wrote as his last great work, one of mingled scholarship and devotion, a *Life of Washington.*

Again this anecdote indicates the ignorance which prevailed in England concerning America. Mr. Arnold Bennett has been severely criticized for the misleading impressions of this country which he has given out since his visit here. If Mr. Bennett has committed errors, he has done so in illustrious company. Charles Dickens nearly seventy years ago did much the same thing. Footnotes and text of Hazlitt's writings show how much of mental obliquity and bad taste he was willing to attribute to "transatlantic solitudes." And every American reader of *The Deserted Village* wonders how Goldsmith could honestly have been so misinformed as to infest the meadows and groves of Georgia with "dark scorpions," "vengeful snakes," and "crouching tigers." Doubtless most English ladies to-day are aware that Mr. Henry James was in no way to be confused with Patrick Henry, and that Dr. Booker T. Washington was not literally a descendant of "the father of his country"; possibly even the lady in the Italian gallery was a ridiculous exception to the generality of English ladies in the 1820's. The ignorance of the two nations concerning each other is still very great, however. And in the early part of the nineteenth century that ignorance was as gross as it was exasperating and unfortunate. The man we are considering, as we shall see, did more than any other to dispel this mutual ignorance.

The little anecdote indicates yet one thing more:

that to even an unlearned woman of the 1820's the *Sketch Book* was at least in name familiar. A few American books, most of them by Charles Brockden Brown, had before that time been sold in England; but they had not introduced household words. The *Sketch Book,* the product of pioneering, Indian-fighting, solitary America, *took* in England; and doubtless Rip Van Winkle and Ichabod Crane are known—as well, perhaps, as King Arthur and Robin Hood are known—by English people who would locate the Hudson in Virginia, and Sleepy Hollow within twenty minutes' walk of Bunker Hill.

On April 3, 1783, just five months before the Treaty of Paris was signed by Great Britain and the United States, Washington Irving, essayist and historian, was born in New York City. The town already considered itself a metropolis, although it contained less than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and where the City Hall now divides endless lines of travel and traffic Irving and his boy friends played on open meadows, over jutting rocks and boulders, and by the side of a brook rippling down to the Hudson. Many of the farmers who brought their products in boats and carts to the markets of the city talked only Dutch. And when in 1803 Irving accepted an invitation to go on a journey to Ogdensburg on the St. Lawrence River, he was exposed to hardships greater than one would expect in Labrador or in western Canada to-day: he heard wolves howling about the camp at night, he came near being murdered by a jealous Indian, and at

Ogdensburg he helped make out deeds for those of the party who wished to settle in the newly-planned town.

His parents were not colonists of long standing: they had come to New York, his father from the Orkney Islands, and his mother from England, in 1763; but in a town well sprinkled with Tories, they were staunch patriots. When their youngest child was born, the mother determined to name him for the masterful general of the Colonial forces. And one day when Washington Irving was a small boy, a Scotch servant who was caring for him followed the President of the United States into a shop and secured for the child the blessing of the great general and statesman.

The boy was not altogether healthy, but neither was he an invalid; and if he learned little Latin and less mathematics, and spent much time roaming over Manhattan Island, hunting along the Hudson, chatting with the Dutch river captains, and reading Defoe and Addison and such other lively works as came his way, it was doubtless because he had an unconcealed distaste for more serious pursuits. His household was one of those where to seek amusement was to court the devil; but in 1849 Irving pointed out to his nephew the route—window ledge to shed roof to board fence and so forth—which it had been his custom to follow in returning to the theater, after he had come home for family prayers at nine o'clock, in order to see the after-piece instead of going to bed.

Two of his brothers attended Columbia College;

Irving did not. The only promising performance of these early days was the writing of a series of letters, closely modeled upon *The Spectator* and *The Tatler,* for his brother's newspaper, letters quite appropriately signed "Jonathan Oldstyle." A hundred years later a boy like Irving would probably have *tried* to be original in style and subject-matter; in 1802, to imitate Addison closely was to do something worthy of the highest praise.

By 1804 Irving's health had greatly declined. It was arranged that he should seek improvement in a journey to Europe. The captain of the vessel on which he embarked said as the young man came aboard that he was destined to go overboard before the ship reached the other side. But before the six weeks' trip was ended, Irving was climbing all over the vessel, and after a few weeks on the Continent nothing more was ever said of consumption.

He used his opportunities chiefly for pleasure. He made some pretense of studying in Paris, but he records attending botany lectures and theatrical performances in the ratio of one to thirteen. At Messina he saw Nelson's fleet on its way to the battle of Trafalgar; and later in London he saw the body of the great admiral, lying in state at Greenwich. An Italian vessel in which he was proceeding to Sicily was overpowered and ransacked by pirates, grim humorists who in return for the liquor and provisions which they had seized gave a receipt and an order on the British consul for payment therefor. He did acquire some proficiency in European languages, and he

did receive a polish which made him acceptable and at home in all sorts of company.

In 1806 he returned to New York, ostensibly to study law, but really to be a thoroughly charming man-about-town. His biographer gives an anecdote which illustrates some of the features of his life in these days. A friend named Ogden, it seems, had left a certain gathering "with a brain half bewildered by the number of bumpers he had been compelled to drink. He told Irving the next day that in going home he had fallen through a grating, which had carelessly been left open, into a vault beneath. The solitude, he said, was rather dismal at first, but several others of the guests fell in, in the course of the evening, and they had on the whole quite a pleasant night of it." The real character of Irving had not yet appeared.

He was admitted to the bar in 1806. Shortly afterwards, in conjunction with James K. Paulding, and wholly, it seems, as a means of amusing himself and the town, he made another sally as a writer. This time it was *Salmagundi,* a series of audacious papers, independently published, and intended, as they declared, "to instruct the young, reform the old, correct the town, and castigate the age." A single paragraph from the prospectus will illustrate its boldness:

"We beg the public particularly to understand that we solicit no patronage. We are determined, on the contrary, that the patronage shall be entirely on our side. We have nothing to do with the pecuniary concerns of the paper; its

success will yield us neither pride nor profit—nor will its failure occasion us either loss or mortification. We advise the public, therefore, to purchase our numbers merely for their own sakes:—if they do not, let them settle the affair with their consciences and posterity."

It ran for a year, twenty numbers in all, appearing with great irregularity, and ceasing as suddenly and as inexplicably as it had begun. With this, perhaps, developed that confidence in his powers which later, when he was pricked to action by necessity rather than by the spirit of fun, determined his career.

He made visits to Albany, to Philadelphia, to Baltimore and Washington, partly on business for his brothers and himself, largely on social errands. And in 1809, again largely for amusement, he produced the work which was to make him famous to his contemporaries if not to posterity. A certain Dr. Samuel Mitchell, one of the Dryasdust kind of antiquarians, had published an erudite but dull and pedantic work called *Picture of New York,* portraying first the aborigines and then, formally and prosaically, the successive events in the town's history. Irving and his brother, Peter, began a burlesque of this work. *They* began with the Creation of the World! Fortunately, it is said, Peter Irving had to go abroad on business; and Washington's skill and taste shaped the entire work. The ingenuity which had conceived and executed *Salmagundi* now found more exalted exercise.

On October 25, 1809, this notice appeared in the *Evening Post:*

"DISTRESSING

"Left his lodgings some time since, and has not since been heard of, a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of KNICKERBOCKER. As there are some reasons for believing he is not entirely in his right mind, and as great anxiety is entertained about him, any information concerning him left either at the Columbian Hotel, Mulberry Street, or at the office of this paper, will be *thankfully* received."

About two weeks later a letter addressed to the editor and signed "A Traveller" informed the public that a person answering the description had been seen by passengers on the Albany stage resting by the roadside a little above Kingsbridge. Ten days later, a letter signed by the landlord of the Columbian Hotel appeared, stating that:

"Nothing satisfactory has been heard of the old gentleman since; but a *very curious kind of a written book* has been found in his room in his own handwriting. Now I wish you to notice him, if he is still alive, that if he does not return and pay off his bill, for board and lodgings, I shall have to dispose of his Book, to satisfy me for the same."

Finally, in December, the actual publication of *A History of New York* was announced, with the information:

"This work was found in the chamber of Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, the old gentleman whose sudden and mysterious disappearance has been noticed. It is published in order to discharge certain debts he has left behind."

The mock dulness and sly pedantry of the work grip the alert reader at once. The following paragraph, which concludes two chapters of discussion as to the nature and formation of the earth, conveys some idea of its style and spirit:

"One thing, however, appears certain—from the unanimous authority of the before-quoted philosophers, supported by the evidence of our own senses (which, though very apt to deceive us, may be cautiously admitted as additional testimony), it appears, I say, and I make the assertion deliberately, without fear of contradiction, that this globe really *was created,* and that it is composed of *land and water.* It farther appears that it is curiously divided and parcelled out into continents and islands, among which I boldly declare the renowned ISLAND OF NEW-YORK will be found by any one who seeks for it in its proper place."

This stupendous piece of humor aroused some resentment among the Dutch people whose ancestors were satirized; but for the most part it awakened only amusement. Walter Scott among foreign readers was particularly appreciative, and asked a mutual friend to be sure to let him have anything else which might come from the same source. Some readers thought it the work of Scott.

While Irving was at work upon *Knickerbocker,* Miss Matilda Hoffman, daughter of the man with whom he had been studying law, Irving's intended bride, died after a distressing illness. Her Bible and Prayer Book he kept with him throughout his life; he never could bear to hear Miss Hoffman spoken of, never of his own accord referred to her; and through-

out his life, although he met the most gifted and attractive women of his time and became very friendly with some of them, he never gave to any the place at his side left vacant by this girl's death. The spectacle presented by Charles Lamb in love affairs is hardly superior to the spectacle of the faithful Irving.

At length Irving became a business partner of his brothers'. His duties were almost nominal, and he continued his round of enjoyment and mental inactivity. When the War of 1812 broke out, he deplored it—and remained inactive, until in 1814 the government buildings in Washington were burned by the British; he then acted as secretary and military aid to the governor of New York until practically the end of the war in 1815.

In May, 1815, he sailed for England on a visit to his brother. He was destined to remain abroad until he came home loaded with honors, the recognized "father of American letters," seventeen years later. Soon after reaching England his brother became ill, and the affairs of the firm became perplexing. He made occasional visits to London and to other places of interest; one visit was to Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford. In 1818, he and his brothers escaped from their business difficulties by going into bankruptcy.

And now the character of Irving, which had gradually been forming, began to appear as it really was. He determined to win a living by his pen. An offer of a clerkship with good pay in the Navy Department at Washington came to him, but he resolutely

declined it. He had for some time been revolving plans for a literary production; he now set about executing his plans. And in March, 1819, he sent to his brother in New York—for he had no slightest expectation of having the work printed or read in England—the early sections of what we know as the *Sketch Book;* other portions followed, and from May, 1819, on into the next year, successive numbers appeared. In February, 1820, so great had grown the danger of having an unauthorized and inaccurate reprint appear in England, Irving undertook on his own responsibility to print the work there.

Its success in both countries was very great. The reviewers were almost unanimous in praise of it. Scott wrote his most hearty approval, and persuaded Murray, the publisher, to take over the responsibility for the English edition.

Irving thus described his modest purpose in writing the book:

"I have attempted no lofty theme, nor sought to look wise and learned, which appears to be very much the fashion among our American writers, at present. I have preferred addressing myself to the feeling and fancy of the reader, more than to his judgment. My writings, therefore, may appear light and trifling in our country of philosophers and politicians; but if they possess merit in the class of literature to which they belong, it is all to which I aspire in the work. I seek only to blow a flute accompaniment in the national concert, and leave others to play the fiddle and French horn."

The preface to the work itself, no less than the essays, shows how his boyish spirit and humor had mellowed

and ripened. The prevailing kindness and good nature of the book, the absence from it of all jealousy, animosity and provincialism distinguish it among works of that time possessing Anglo-American significance.

For nearly two years Irving was able to do little further work. He never entertained an exalted idea of his abilities, and the praise which was showered upon him seemed to paralyze him with wonder as to whether or not he deserved it. He traveled on the continent, returned to England, mingled with society, and at length, in 1822, printed *Bracebridge Hall,* simultaneously in America and in England.

The rest of Irving's life is of minor consequence to the student of essays. In 1824 appeared his *Tales of a Traveller,* consisting, like the earlier works, of mingled tale and essay. He was for a time attaché to the American legation at Madrid, was there met by Longfellow (then traveling in preparation for his work as Professor of Modern Languages at Bowdoin College), and there produced his *Life of Columbus* in 1828. Later he was secretary to the legation at London. His work there was so confining that it left him little time for composition or for society; and when in 1831 an opportunity came for resigning with honor, he seized the opportunity, and returned to America. He was received as befitted the man who had established a position for American letters; he was given a dinner, and responded in great trepidation to a toast—the only speech he ever made.

His activity was very great. *Tales of the Alhambra,* called by Prescott the "Spanish Sketch Book," soon ap-

peared. He declined flattering political opportunities. In 1833 he purchased and began to develop Sunnyside, or, as he first called it, the Roost (rest), on the Hudson below Tarrytown. Here he supported in great comfort his brothers and his nieces. Various works written by him there appeared from time to time.

An impressive instance of Irving's self-denial is recorded. In 1838, Irving learned that his friend Prescott was planning to begin his study of the conquest of Mexico. It was a field which Irving, unknown to Prescott, had long contemplated, and in which he had already collected some material. Rather than compete with Prescott, however, Irving now promptly and uncomplainingly abandoned the project.

In 1842, Charles Dickens visited America; the one writer to whom he paid court was Washington Irving. Irving presided at a dinner in Dickens' honor, tried to make a speech, and broke down in the middle of it. The same year at the request of Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, Irving accepted the important office of minister to Spain. For four years he endured the burden of official duties, the interruptions in his work upon his *Life of Washington,* and the absence from his beloved Sunnyside. He then returned home.

At length he prepared a revised edition of his works. Struggling against failing health, he produced *Wolfert's Roost* in 1855, a series of essays equal in merit to those of the *Sketch Book* and of *Bracebridge Hall.* And between 1855 and 1859 appeared his *Life of Washington.* He now began to dread the loss of his faculties. "I do not fear death," he said, "but I

would like to go down with all sail set." And he had his wish, his mind remaining clear to the end, which came on November 29th, 1859.

If each of the authors so far considered had been able to preserve for posterity only one or two of his works, which, one wonders, would he have selected? Lamb *might* have picked the *Elia* essays; but presumably if fondness for Mary had not made him take their joint work, the *Tales from Shakespeare,* his own inherent dignity would have suffered only *Specimens from the English Dramatic Poets.* Hazlitt would surely have thrown upon the life-raft, first, his *Life of Napoleon,* and, second, that discovery of *The Disinterestedness of Human Action.* Irving surely would have taken one or more of his biographies—had they not won for him an LL.D. from Oxford University and the solid reputation he enjoyed?

Sooner or later in the centuries stretching namelessly out before us, our great libraries must sort their collections. It is inevitable that just as works of obscure writers are now consigned to obscure vaults, so, in some future time, either to obscure vaults or to the trash heap must go the obscure works of noted authors. Will Lamb's probable choice be justified at that time? Surely Hazlitt's will not. Of Irving's works, which will still be allowed space on the working shelves? The *Knickerbocker History,* doubtless, at least in a thin-paper edition; and surely those lucubrations, antique in flavor but forever modern in their humor, their kindliness and good nature—the essays and sketches of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.

Here, then, is the choice essayist whom we read in the *Sketch Book,* in *Bracebridge Hall,* and in *Wolfert's Roost;* sprightly, courtly, and patriotic; one who for fifty years was faithful to the memory of his early love; a man who would not claim for his own a field of study upon which a friend had set his heart; a spirit which in an age of political and artistic animosity and jealousy nourished neither. Few succinct analyses of his character can equal Lowell's in *A Fable for Critics:*

"To a true poet-heart and the fun of Dick Steele
Throw in all of Addison, *minus* the chill,
With the whole of that partnership's stock and good will,
Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
The fine *old* English Gentleman, simmer it well,
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain.
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
From the warm lazy sun loitering down through green leaves
And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly deserving
A name either English or Yankee,—just Irving."

(JAMES HENRY) LEIGH HUNT (1784-1859)

Chronology

1784 Born, Southgate, Middlesex, October 19.
1792 Entered Christ's Hospital School.
1807 Theatrical criticisms collected and published.
1808 Began weekly *Examiner* with brother. 1812, Prince Regent affair; convicted for libel; imprisoned.
1815-1817 *The Round Table* essays, with Hazlitt in *Examiner.* 1816, Introduced Keats to Shelley and both to public.

1816 *Story of Rimini,* metrical version of Paola and Francesca story.
1819 *The Indicator,* periodical, seventy-six weeks.
1821-1825 Italian sojourn; failure of the *Liberal.*
1828 *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries.*
1830-1832 *The Tatler,* four-page daily.
1833 Neighbor of the Carlyles in Chelsea.
1840 Play, *A Legend of Florence,* at Covent Garden.
1844 *Poems of Imagination and Fancy,* a collection.
1847 Benefit theatrical performance by Dickens.
1850 *Autobiography;* revised, 1859.
1852 Dickens' *Bleak House*—Harold Skimpole.
1859 Death at Putney, August 28.

Many people who look perplexed when one mentions Leigh Hunt, brighten up when one adds—author of *Abou Ben Adhem.* People usually brighten still more when they hear also these other lines of his:

"Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in:
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have miss'd me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kiss'd me!"

And when one recalls these two effusions he already has a fairly comprehensive notion of Leigh Hunt. Simple and direct in his religious views, full of childlike delight over attention or appreciation or favors from others, able to exalt the most commonplace emotions into charming literary products, he was, as Carlyle said, "free, cheery, *idly* melodious as bird on

bough." What misery and trials Hazlitt enjoyed grumbling about, and Lamb had the stamina cheerfully to withstand, Hunt was so constituted as never seriously to regard at all. The two ideas expressed in the poems referred to—the thought that love of one's fellowmen (he meant not service as we should mean to-day, but simple spiritual sympathy and yearning) would merit the blessing of God's love, and the recollection that a beautiful woman (the original is said to have been Mrs. Carlyle) had shown him signal favor—these were genuine consolations for a grown-up child such as Hunt was.

Three marked characteristics of Hunt as a man can readily be traced to his parents: these are his irresponsibility, financial in particular; his sensitiveness—sentimentalism it often became; and the peculiar sweetness and beauty of his religious convictions. His father, a descendant of one of the earliest Barbadoes settlers, was the sanguine, impractical parent. He had been educated in Philadelphia, had been persecuted there as a Loyalist at the outbreak of the Revolution, and returning to England had become a popular preacher. He was popular also, however, at dinner-tables where wine circulated. And when people came to him in distress, he went security for them. When at length he received a Loyalist Pension of one hundred pounds a year, he was obliged to mortgage it. A knock at the door of the Hunt home all too often meant the arrival of another bailiff. And the first room Leigh Hunt had any recollection of was a prison.

His sensitiveness Hunt inherited from his mother.

She was of a Philadelphia family of Quakers. The flight of her husband from that city pursued by a mob seems to have raised to a passion her innate horror of war. She would make long circuits with her son to avoid the proximity of a fight in the streets or even soldiers strolling in the parks. She inculcated in her son the principle of not striking back. There are numerous examples of her tender care for acquaintances or dependents whom others had abandoned. This anecdote, related by Leigh Hunt in his *Autobiography,* is characteristic:

"One holiday, in a severe winter, as she was taking me home, she was petitioned for charity by a woman sick and ill-clothed. It was in Blackfriars Road, I think about midway. My mother, with the tears in her eyes, turned up a gateway, or some such place, and beckoning the woman to follow, took off her flannel petticoat and gave it her. It is supposed that a cold which ensued fixed the rheumatism upon her for life. Actions like these have doubtless been often performed, and do not of necessity imply any great virtue in the performer: but they do if they are of a piece with the rest of the character. Saints have been made for charities no greater."

Both parents possessed a religion that was above all tender, not vindictive, not dogmatic. Hunt's father began as a clergyman of the Established Church with a weakness for preaching charity sermons—a weakness formally frowned upon by the unevangelical Church authorities of the time. Both parents were led by their unorthodox speculations to become Unitarians, with also a firm belief in Universalist prin-

ciples. It was to them as to Leigh Hunt at once horrible and absurd to think that there is such a thing as *eternal* punishment. To think other than that "all mankind, even the demons themselves, will be finally restored to happiness" was for them the height of impiety toward Almighty God. These beliefs were not passive, but active and vivid; they permeate Hunt's writings. We shall see how truly Hunt in these different ways was the son of his parents.

Leigh Hunt, or, as he was christened, James Henry Leigh Hunt, entered Christ's Hospital School in 1792 as Coleridge and Lamb quitted it. Because of a hesitation in his speech which would have prevented his success as a clergyman, he was not sent to the University. Reading, writing, and the simple joys of home life seem to have occupied him as a youth. At seventeen, a volume of his *Juvenilia* was published by subscription. A gift from his father of a set of the *British Classics,* a collection of eighteenth century periodical essays, uncovered the vein which he was to work most successfully in life: he began writing essays, and soon found publishers. Some theatrical criticisms, first written for his brother's newspaper, were reprinted in 1807 as *Critical Essays on Performances, etc.* This method of reprinting his periodical essays in books he followed throughout his literary career. Various clerkships followed; then, in conjunction with his brother, he established in 1808 an independent, liberal weekly newspaper called *The Examiner.* This paper is said to have raised the tone

of newspaper writing, then none too high, by its consistent fairness, tolerance, and good taste. In it appeared between 1815 and 1817 those *Round Table* essays, written some by Hunt, mostly by Hazlitt.

The brothers Hunt were, however, rather too independent for their times. An article in *The Examiner* protesting against military floggings brought upon them a court trial which ended in acquittal. Unaffected by this narrow escape, they published another article which exposed the blatant flattery of certain contemporary verses regarding the Prince Regent and gave a plain description of that unsavory gentleman. This brought on another libel suit. This time conviction followed, with sentence of two years' imprisonment and a fine of five hundred pounds, to be remitted on pledge of abstinence from such attacks in the future. Both brothers refused to give this pledge, and Leigh Hunt served the full term in Surrey Gaol.

His health almost forsook him during this period, but his friends and his spirits did not. Lamb records that Hunt had so transformed his "cell" with furniture, wall-paper, and flowers that it seemed a fairy bower. His wife, whom he had married in 1809, was allowed to live in the jail with him. He continued to edit *The Examiner* from the jail. It was there, in 1816, that Hunt introduced Keats to Shelley; and from there, through *The Examiner,* he introduced Keats and Shelley to the public.

Hunt's first long poem, *The Story of Rimini,* was a version of the Paolo and Francesca story; it appeared in 1818. A complete list of his poems, his

books, and the periodicals on which he was successively engaged is superfluous. The most notable of his works are *The Indicator,* which ran for seventy-six weeks, beginning in 1819; *The Tatler,* a four-page *daily,* which from 1830 to 1832 Hunt wrote and published all alone; *Imagination and Fancy,* a collection of extracts with critical notices and an *Essay on Poetry,* published in 1844; and his *Autobiography* (regarded by Carlyle as second in biographical writing only to Boswell's *Johnson*), first published in 1850, and brought up to date in 1859.

Two painful incidents remain to be chronicled. In 1821, Shelley and Byron, both then living in Italy, persuaded Hunt to undertake at Pisa the editing of a quarterly magazine which from that point could be more liberal than would be safe in London. After many delays Hunt arrived in Italy with his family. The project soon proved forlorn. In July, 1821, Shelley was drowned off the Italian coast. Hunt wrote the epitaph for his tomb. Byron's interest in the magazine, always fickle, now cooled. Hunt at first moved about, to Greece and elsewhere, with Byron, finding it harder and harder to support himself and his family. At length, in 1825, he managed to return to England. And in 1828 in a work called *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries,* he revealed much about the poet, by that time deceased, which as Byron's favored acquaintance he ought rather to have concealed. As the Italian project was the great misfortune, this publication was the great blunder of his life.

The other painful event occurred in 1852. The character of Harold Skimpole, in Dickens' *Bleak House* published that year, was at once thought by Hunt's acquaintances to be a caricature of Hunt—his improvidence, his sentimentalism, his good nature. Now Dickens had been Hunt's generous friend; in 1847, with an amateur company, Dickens had given a benefit theatrical performance for Hunt. And Dickens promptly disclaimed any but the most indirect connection between Hunt and Harold Skimpole. But the likeness was there, and the facts rankled.

In 1857, Hunt's wife died. In 1859, appeared his last series of papers, in *The Spectator*. On August 28, 1859, he died in Putney, asking eager questions about current events and about his relatives. Over his tomb in Kensal Green Cemetery his bust has been erected with the inscription,

"Write me as one who loved his fellow men."

These are the bare facts. Something of the spirit of Leigh Hunt is indicated by that stand for the truth in the Prince-Regent case, and by that patient endurance of imprisonment. Something more is indicated by the persistence with which he pursued his literary career, often subsisting on bread and water, often during the worst years (1834-1840) going without food,—lacking grit, perhaps, as Hawthorne said, yet ever courageous, sweet-tempered, forgiving. A

few anecdotes will perhaps round out a comprehensive idea of the man.

Along with a hatred of quarreling, Hunt's mother had transmitted to him a disgust for profanity. He says:

"she had produced in me such a horror, or rather such an intense idea of even violent words, and of the commonest trivial oath, that being led one day, perhaps by the very excess of it, to snatch a 'fearful joy' in its utterance, it gave so much remorse that for some time afterward I could not receive a bit of praise, or a pat of encouragement on the head, without thinking to myself, 'Ah, they little suspect that I am the boy who said d—n it.'"

Observe the impressibility, the sensitiveness, which are indicated by this middle-age memory:

"That is a pleasant time of life, the play-going time in youth, when the coach is packed full to go to the theatre, and brothers and sisters, parents and lovers (none of whom, perhaps, go very often) are all wafted together in a flurry of expectation; when the only wish as they go (except with the lovers) is to go as fast as possible, and no sound is so delightful as the cry of 'Bill of the Play'; when the smell of links in the darkest and muddiest winter's night is charming; and the steps of the coach are let down; and a roar of hoarse voices round the door, and *mud-shine* on the pavement, are accompanied with the sight of the warm-looking lobby which is about to be entered; and they enter, and pay, and ascend the pleasant stairs, and begin to hear the *silence* of the house, perhaps the first jingle of the music; and the box is entered amidst some little awkwardness in descending to their places and being looked at; and at length they sit, and are become used to by their neighbors, and shawls and

smiles are adjusted, and the play-bill is handed round or pinned to the cushion, and the gods are a little noisy, and the music veritably commences, and at length the curtain is drawn up, and the first delightful syllables are heard: 'Ah! my dear Charles, when did you see the lovely Olivia?' 'Oh! my dear Sir George, talk not to me of Olivia. The cruel guardian,' etc."

Again, Hunt thrills us with the delicacy of his sentiment in this:

"Dr. Young talks of—

" 'That hideous sight, a naked human heart;'

a line not fit to have been written by a human being. . . . I don't believe it. I don't believe he had a right thus to calumniate it, much less that of his neighbor, and of the whole human race.

"I saw a worse sight than the heart, in a journey which I took into a neighboring county. It was an infant, all over sores, and cased in steel; the result of the irregularities of its father: and I confess that I would rather have seen the heart of the very father of that child, than I would the child himself. . . . I never beheld such a sight, before or since, except in one of the pictures of Hogarth in his Rake's Progress; and I sadden this page with the recollection, for the same reason that induced him to paint it."

One of the most striking things about Hunt is his whole-souled admiration of human life regardless of the hardships he experienced. In one essay he fancies some of the comforts and joys of heaven. Among the blessings he enumerates are a friend; a mistress (the term, he says, is legal, since there is in heaven no marrying nor giving in marriage); books—Spenser and Shakespeare shall write new ones, and Scott forty

more as good as the Scotch ones; tea for breakfast; horses to ride; and, finally, this:

"The weather will be extremely fine, but not without such varieties as shall hinder it from being tiresome. April will dress the whole country in diamonds; and there will be enough cold in winter to make a fire pleasant of an evening. The fire will be made of sweet-smelling turf and sunbeams; but it will have a look of coal. If we choose now and then, we shall even have inconveniences."

His essay is entitled *An Earth Upon Heaven!*

In his *Deaths of Little Children,* the favorite essay (how pathetic to recall!) of Charles Lamb, written within sight of the grave of one of his own children, he expresses this delicate and beautiful consolation:

"Those who have lost an infant are never, as it were, without an infant child. They are the only persons who, in one sense, retain it always; and they furnish their neighbors with the same idea. The other children grow up to manhood and womanhood, and suffer all the changes of mortality. This one alone is rendered an immortal child. Death has arrested it with its kindly harshness, and blessed it into an eternal image of youth and innocence."

Even for the Prince Regent, whose conduct filled him with disgust and on whose account he had suffered much, he had no vindictiveness. In concluding the account of *The Examiner* incident in his *Autobiography,* he says:

"Neither have I any quarrel, at this distance of time, with the Prince Regent; for though his frivolity, his tergiversa-

tion, and his treatment of his wife, will not allow me to respect his memory, I am bound to pardon it as I do my own faults, in consideration of the circumstances which mould the character of every human being. Could I meet him in some odd corner of the Elysian fields, where charity had room for both of us, I should first apologize to him for having been the instrument in the hand of events for attacking a fellow-creature, and then expect to hear him avow as heartily a regret for having injured myself, and unjustly treated his wife."

Both Carlyle and Hawthorne speak of the sad contrast between Hunt's nature and his ordinary surroundings. Having emphasized the neatness and propriety of Hunt's appearance whenever he went visiting, Carlyle writes further:

"His Household, while in '4 *Upper* Cheyne Row,' within few steps of us here, almost at once disclosed itself to be huggermugger, *un*thrift, and sordid collapse, once for all; and had to be associated with on cautious terms;—while he himself emerged out of it in the chivalrous figure I describe. Dark complexion (a trace of the African, I believe), copious, clean, strong, black hair, beautifully-shaped, fine beaming serious hazel eyes; *seriousness* and intellect the main expression of the face (to our surprise at first),—he would lean on his elbow against the mantel-piece (fine, clean, elastic figure too he had, five feet ten or more), and look round him nearly in silence, before taking leave for the night; as if I were a *Lar,* said he once, or permanent Household God here! (Such his polite *Ariel*-like way.) Another time, rising from this *Lar* attitude, he repeated (voice very fine) as if in sport of parody, yet with something of very sad perceptible: While I to sulphurous and penal fire—as the last thing before vanishing."

And Hawthorne, after describing Hunt's sordid quarters, continues:

"Leigh Hunt was born with such a faculty of enjoying all beautiful things that it seemed as if fortune did him as much wrong in not supplying them as in withholding a sufficiency of vital breath from ordinary men. . . . Leigh Hunt loved dearly to be praised. That is to say, he desired sympathy as a flower seeks sunshine, and perhaps profited by it as much in the richer depth of coloring that it imparted to his ideas. In response to all that we ventured to express about his writings (and, for my part, I went quite to the extent of my conscience, which was a long way, and there left the matter to a lady and a young girl, who happily were with me), his face shone, and he manifested great delight, with a perfect and yet delicate frankness for which I loved him. He could not tell us, he said, the happiness that such appreciation gave him; it always took him by surprise, he remarked, for—perhaps because he cleaned his own boots, and performed other little ordinary offices for himself—he never had been conscious of anything wonderful in his own person. And then he smiled, making himself and all the poor little parlor about him beautiful thereby. . . . I wish that he could have had one full draught of prosperity before he died. As a matter of artistic propriety, it would have been delightful to have seen him inhabiting a beautiful house of his own, in an Italian climate, with all sorts of elaborate upholstery and minute elegances about him, and a succession of tender and lovely women to praise his sweet poetry from morning to night."

Enough has surely been said to enable the reader to distinguish the real Leigh Hunt in his writings. It is perhaps easy to dwell too long upon him, to appear to claim too much for him. It should be remembered, however, that he enjoyed the respect and the love of

so finical a creature as Carlyle, and that men like Lamb, Hazlitt, Hawthorne, and Lowell not only suffered but sought his friendship. Through his critical essays and the exuberant quotations in all his works, he popularized Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton. And to have introduced Keats and Shelley to each other and to the world is to have deserved extraordinarily well of posterity. After all, however, we shall remember him longest for his simple, kindly presentation of homely facts and fancies. It is as Professor Winchester says:

"... we could still select from Hunt's writing a goodly volume of essays hard to surpass in their kind. They are made up of trifles; but then life is made up of trifles. We need not withhold some cordial liking from that kind of literature which does not attempt to arouse or inspire, but rather to express the familiar pleasures that cheer, and the familiar trials that chasten the hours of every day. . . . He was not of the stuff that scorns delights and lives laborious days. He had solved no problems, inspired no heroisms, written no masterpieces. But he did something in early life for the cause of civil liberty; he did more, I think, in his later years to quicken and widen the love of good literature. And through all that half-century, by three generations of friends, he was known as a genial, cheery man, who never felt the tedium of life, was hopeful under all its discouragements, impatient of all harshness, fond of all gentle and beautiful things."

THOMAS DE QUINCEY (1785-1859)

Chronology

1785 Born, August 15, at Manchester; son of a well-to-do merchant.

1796 At Bath Grammar School.

1801 To Manchester Grammar School. Wrote and spoke Greek. No exercise, hard study, abuse, liver trouble, dosing.
1802 Ran away. Journey through Wales to London; poverty, sufferings, Ann.
1804 At Winchester College, Oxford. Began opium-eating—rheumatism or neuralgia. Admiration for Wordsworth and Coleridge.
1807 Made acquaintance of Coleridge; left Oxford without degree.
1809 Leased cottage vacated by Wordsworth at Grasmere; stomach disease; opium; inactivity; philosophical studies.
1816 Married Margaret Simpson, farmer's daughter.
1819 Edited *Westmoreland Gazette,* local newspaper.
1821 Went to live in London; *Confessions* in *London Magazine.*
1827 *On Murder* in *Blackwood's.* 1832, *Klosterheim,* a novel.
1840 Moved to Lasswade, near Edinburgh.
1844 Finally overcame opium habit. *Logic of Political Economy.*
1849 *English Mail Coach* in *Blackwood's.*
1851-2 First collected edition of *Works*—America.
1859 Died, December 8. Buried in West Churchyard, Edinburgh.

"I have observed," says Addison, in the first number of *The Spectator,* "that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure, until he know whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a batchelor, with other particulars of the like nature, that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author." And life and writings of no author on our list are more closely bound

up together than those of Thomas De Quincey. Even his most objective essays, such as *On Murder* and *Joan of Arc,* vividly reflect his temperament and his experiences; far the greater part of his work is frankly autobiographical. Living, in all its phases, and especially in its inner, intellectual manifestations, was fascinating business to De Quincey; and books, articles —they were the means of sharing this fascination with others.

Ingrained zest of living and feeling and knowing was probably never more essential to any man. With it he lived to a ripe age, and enlarged the record of man's proper and age-long study by rich accounts of the man De Quincey. Without the inborn zest of living, he would doubtless have found a place, while still a youth, in the Potter's Field.

Glance at the vivid miniature painted by Carlyle:

"One of the smallest man-figures I ever saw; shaped like a pair of tongs; and hardly above five feet in all: when he sat, you would have taken him by candle-light for the beautifullest little child; blue-eyed, blonde-haired, sparkling face,—had there not been a something, too, which said, *'Eccovi,* this child has been in Hell!'"

Diminutive in size, prococious in intellect, supersensitive in temperament, his earliest recollections were those of deaths in the family—first his beloved sister's, then his father's. The next most poignant were of the cruelties inflicted by older, pugnacious brothers. An abused school-boy at sixteen, he ran away at seventeen, and wandered through Wales and

to London, often sleeping on open hillsides, seldom properly fed. London's welcome and hospitality to such a wanderer may be surmised. He found shelter in a house noteworthy for its hermit-like tenant, for the rats it harbored, and for the half-starved little girl who was its only housekeeper. He associated, in all the innocence of mutual misery and forlornity, with an outcast woman named Ann; she once saved his life by securing wine for him when he was faint with starvation; and it was the torture of his subconscious existence after better times had come for him that he was unable to find and reward her.

While a young student at Oxford he began the practice of taking opium. The hardships he had undergone both as a schoolboy and as a wanderer in Wales and in London had resulted in a most acute and violent rheumatism or neuralgia. Later he was seized with an irritation of the stomach, since diagnosed to have been a peculiar disease. In each case he resorted to opium and drank it in huge quantities; he later decreased his doses, then experimented with himself, then lapsed into excesses, finally fought and overcame the habit.

He strove persistently against irregularities and weaknesses of other kinds—against financial improvidence and gullibility, against utter lack of method in study and composition. At his death he was paying rent on six sets of Edinburgh lodgings each of which he had occupied in turn until accumulated books, papers, and manuscripts had crowded out of doors the author; he once went to call on a friend, and re-

mained in his house a year; he is said to have gone about Edinburgh with a five-pound note unused in his pocket, trying in vain to find some one to lend him a shilling.

Seventy-four years of pain and struggle and eccentricity, fourteen volumes or so of writings—consisting chiefly of one hundred and fifty magazine articles, a total of several times that much written but never published—fit only, his mind being gone, to be carried from the six snowed-up apartments to the city bonfire: that is the exhibition we contemplate in the life and works of De Quincey.

Why do we remember him? Why does every series of popular reprints include one or more volumes by him? Why do literary critics and historians omitting often every other author we have treated except Lamb, invariably treat at length of De Quincey?

Well, it is not because of any divine or superhuman or inspiring message which he had to deliver. The element of warning contained in his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* is for many readers obscured by the pervading attractiveness of opium-eating there depicted. It would be hard to discover a single important item added by De Quincey to the sum of human knowledge or the wealth of real human happiness. He devised no theory, no doctrine which would make more simple and intelligible the baffling complexity, the inchoateness of human experience.

De Quincey, furthermore, would not be persistently remembered for his skill in the presentation of ideas.

This skill may attract for a time, but it soon becomes obvious that almost every one of his compositions includes material that is superfluous, digressions that often obscure and that frequently do not entertain.

His humor is seldom attractive; it is usually so forced and unnatural as to be almost vulgar. This quality sometimes approaches a playfulness which is not wholly displeasing, as in the following passage concerning Lamb:

"Perhaps the collective wisdom of Europe could not have devised for Lamb a more favorable condition of toil than this very India House clerkship. His works (his Leadenhall street works) were certainly not read; popular they *could* not be, for they were not read by anybody; but then, to balance *that,* they were not reviewed. . . . The list of *errata* again, committed by Lamb, was probably of a magnitude to alarm any possible compositor; and yet these *errata* will probably never be known to mankind. They are dead and buried. . . . Then the returns, in a pecuniary sense, from these folios—how important were they! It is not common, certainly, to write folios; but neither is it common to draw a steady income from 300 *l.* to 400 *l.* per annum from volumes of any size."

Usually, however, his humor is of the sort indicated by the following extracts, each from his essay on the dignified subject of *Style:*

"You, therefore, oh, reader! if personally cognisant of dumb-bells, we shall remind—if not, we shall inform—that it is a cylindrical bar of iron, issuing at each end in a globe of the same metal, and usually it is sheathed in green baize; but, perfidiously so, if that covering is meant to conceal the

fact of those heart-rending thumps which it inflicts upon one's too confiding fingers every third *ictus*. . . . Now, reader, it is under this image of the dumb-bell we couch an allegory. Those globes at each end are the two systems or separate clusters of Greek literature; and that cylinder which connects them, is the long man that ran into each system—binding the two together. Who was that? It was Isocrates. *Great* we cannot call him in conscience; and, therefore, by way of compromise, we call him *long*, which, in one sense, he certainly was; for he lived through four-and-twenty Olympiads, each containing four solar years."

"Who were they that next took up the literary use of prose? Confining our notice to people of celebrity, we may say that the house of Socrates (*Domus Socratica* is the expression of Horace) were those who next attempted to popularise Greek prose; viz., the old gentleman himself, the founder of the concern, and his two apprentices, Plato and Xenophon."

"These, unless parried, are knock-down blows to the Socratic, and therefore to the Platonic philosophy. . . . And all the German Tiedemanns and Tennemanns, the tedious men and the tenpenny-men, that have their twelve or their eighteen volumes *viritim* upon Plato, will find it hard to satisfy their readers, etc."

If De Quincey's fame is unlikely, then, to be perpetuated either by his digressions or by his peculiar humor, so it is unlikely to be perpetuated by the general effect of his style. That style is invariably self-conscious; one can never forget that the most beautiful of the impassioned passages are *composed*. He writes not to relieve the burden upon his heart, not because he must, but to show what it is possible for

man to do with words, to reveal his own peculiar capabilities. He is less a literary artist, less indeed a literary artisan, than a literary acrobat or prestidigitator.

Still men honor and cherish him, and will continue to do so. The fundamental reason for this seems to be that in De Quincey we perceive certain valuable human attributes developed to a stimulating and inspiring degree.

The first of these attributes is his vast knowledge. Science, philosophy, history of all countries, the literature of all languages, the details and the working of the human machine, the face of nature,—of all these things he seems to know all. The passages quoted above, like any page from his writings, confirm this statement.

Of course, this exhibition of knowledge is possible and natural because De Quincey had the industry to read and to observe widely, and a marvelous memory for what he had read and seen. This is the second stimulating quality of De Quincey. He says:

"Rarely do things perish from my memory that are worth remembering. Rubbish perishes instantly. Hence it happens that passages in Latin or English poets, which I never could have read but once (and that thirty years ago), often begin to blossom anew when I lie awake unable to sleep. I become a distinguished compositor in the darkness; and with my aërial composing-stick sometimes I 'set up' half a page of verses, which would be found tolerably correct if collated with the volume that I never had in my hand but once. I mention this in no spirit of boasting. Far from it; for, on

the contrary, among my mortifications have been compliments to my memory, when, in fact, any compliments that I had merited were due to the higher faculty of an electric aptitude for seizing analogies, and by means of these aërial pontoons passing over like lightning from one topic to another."

The third attribute, hinted at in the closing words of that passage, the third quality which inspires, is the richness, the abundance of his associations—using the word in the psychological sense. The vast knowledge stored in his marvelous memory is instantly available at the first suggestion. He sees some young people dancing an old-fashioned dance; and instantly all sorts of suggestions, cross-references, experiences, recollections, surmises, and dreams flow to his pen-point. His praise of Burke may be applied to himself:

"His great and peculiar distinction was that he viewed all objects of the understanding under more relations than other men, and under more complex relations. According to the multiplicity of these relations, a man is said to have a *large* understanding: according to their subtlety, a *fine* one; and in an angelic understanding, all things would appear to be related to all."

He seldom repeats; each thread in the vast web of his mind seems to be attached to a different set of other threads. That richness of intellect, feebly counterparted in the mind of each of us, is the birthright, we seem to feel, of *every* human being. De Quincey, we conclude, approximated the angelic, the ideal mind.

Knowledge, memory, richness of association: and with these stimulating qualities, place De Quincey's wonderful facility of expression. Three features of it impress one: its coherence, its figurativeness, and its melody.

The coherence of his writing is no mere accidental attribute. He deliberately sought "sequaciousness," as he called it. These two passages indicate his ideal in this connection:

"Take any sentence you please from Dr. Johnson, suppose, and it will be found to contain a thought—good or bad—fully preconceived. Whereas, in Burke, whatever may have been the preconception, it receives a new determination or inflexion at every clause of the sentence. Some collateral adjunct of the main proposition, some temperament or restraint, some oblique glance at its remote affinities, will invariably be found to attend the progress of his sentences—like the spray from a waterfall, or the scintillations from the iron under the blacksmith's hammer."

"Every man, as he walks through the streets, may contrive to jot down an independent thought: a shorthand memorandum of a great truth. . . . Standing on one leg you may accomplish this. The labor of composition begins when you have to put your separate threads of thought into a loom; to weave them into a continuous whole; to connect, to introduce them; to blow them out or expand them; to carry them to a close."

As for the figurativeness and the melody of his style, little comment is necessary; in reading you cannot miss either. Both qualities contribute to the effectiveness of his "impassioned prose," that near-

poetry yet non-poetical kind of writing which he affected. He thought himself the virtual inventor of this form; he surely stands alone with Ruskin at the head of its exponents.

Such, we may conclude, is the basis of our persistent admiration for De Quincey. The *great* writer, the *ne plus ultra* in literature, when he appears, we may conclude further, will possess these qualities which so distinguish De Quincey. He will possess along with a message, along with clarity, sound humor, and sturdy naturalness, none of which were De Quincey's, these qualities of vast knowledge always ready to hand through memory and association, and of surpassing facility of expression. It is hard to see how any writer can possess these last inspiring attributes in a greater measure than De Quincey himself possessed them.

THOMAS CARLYLE (1795-1881)

Chronology

1795 Born, December 5, at Ecclefechan, Scotland.
1805 To school at Annan.
1809 To Edinburgh University to prepare for the ministry.
1814-1818 Tutor; Annan, Kirkcaldy. Decided not to become a minister.
1818 To Edinburgh to study law. Tutoring, reading, suffering.
1821 "Conversion," in Leith Walk, Edinburgh. Determined to write for a living.
1824 *Life of Schiller;* translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister.*
1826 Married Jane Baillie Welsh. Other translations.

1828-1834 At Craigenputtock. Magazine articles; poverty; work on *Sartor;* visit to London. *Sartor Resartus* in *Fraser's Magazine.*

1834-1881 At 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea (near London). Friends—J. S. Mill, Leigh Hunt, Tennyson, Dickens, Thackeray, Froude, Ruskin, Emerson.

1857 *French Revolution.* Other magazine articles. Lectures.

1839 *Chartism;* 1841, *Heroes and Hero-Worship;* 1843, *Past and Present;* 1845, *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell;* 1849, *Nigger Question;* 1850, *Latter-Day Pamphlets;* 1851, *Life of John Sterling;* 1858-1865, *Frederick the Great.*

1866 Address as rector of Edinburgh University, April 2. Death of Mrs. Carlyle.

1874 Prussian Order of Merit. Offered honors by Disraeli, Prime Minister.

1881 Death, February 4. Buried at Ecclefechan.

What is the real condition of England during the part of the nineteenth century we have been contemplating? In order to be more definite, what was its condition, let us say, between 1820 and 1830—the decade which saw produced the *Elia Essays,* most of Hazlitt's *Table Talk, Bracebridge Hall,* and those charming trifles about pigs and six fat persons in one coach and cold razors and tears for the dead, the joys of opium, of coaching, of dreaming, of being De Quincey? Do these productions—they constitute the best non-fiction prose writing of the decade—does this sort of reading fairly reflect the condition and the interests of the English nation?

Let a few sharp lines sketch an answer. On many a night during this decade, we are assured, one of

the vehicles which scuttled out of the way of the Manchester and Glasgow Royal Mail was a sorry affair, loaded to the breaking-point with live stock—two-legged live stock: London foundlings, poor orphans, being disposed of under contract to employers of labor in northern factories. Last year the poor of Brunswick, Maine, cost the town about sixty cents per inhabitant; the usual expenditure in New England is about one dollar per inhabitant; in England during this early decade, the expenditure was twice as great as it is now in England, three times as great as in New England to-day, five times as great as it was in Brunswick last year. And these figures make no allowance for the change in the value of money since that time. A few years before 1820 child labor had become such a fearful abuse that restrictive measures *had* to be passed; and during this decade the law forbade employers to keep children at work more than—twelve hours a day!

What of all this do we find reflected in the writings of the early nineteenth-century essayists? Are such things out of the sphere of the man of letters? Chaucer could write literature for posterity and by the same lines open men's eyes to the clerical and social abuses of his time; Shakespeare satisfied the Globe groundlings and also developed new and high moral and artistic standards. Milton recorded his sublime visions and in mighty fashion flayed reactionaries and instilled religion as well. The greatest men of letters may be said to have found their chief inspiration in the interests and problems that concerned and racked

their contemporaries. Pleasant, genial, fascinating, the men we have studied are; we reserve terms of greater approbation for the man who fascinates even while he wrestles with the ills of the world around him.

Carlyle so wrestled. In 1830, the last year of our chosen decade, he was but little known. By 1848 his circle of influence was wide. It was in that year that a rich young man, a man interested in all the conventional forms of literary expression and having a marvelous gift for expressing the many things which he found significant in art, John Ruskin by name, deliberately turned his attention to social conditions. He had read Carlyle. "It is no time for the idleness of metaphysics or the entertainment of the arts," he said. He became the most advanced, the most vigorous, and the most effective of England's social reformers—continuing at the same time to be one of her most noteworthy essayists. American Emerson, who had been stirred with sympathy when he read Carlyle's earliest writings, wrote of Carlyle in this same year of 1848: "He thinks it [the bad times, the social discontent] the only question for wise men, instead of arts and fine fancies and poetry and such things, to address themselves to the problems of society. This confusion is the inevitable end of such falsehoods and nonsense as they have been embroiled with."

There is a familiar sound to us in this "problem of society": we shall never be beyond the circle of that sound during the rest of the century. The actual tones of Carlyle may not ring among us still; but

sympathetic vibrations awakened by those tones tintinnabulate mightily in English-speaking countries today.

Carlyle's development previous to the decade we have chosen as a center, need not detain us long. His experiences within that decade and during the few years immediately succeeding it contain more that is of significance. And briefly again we shall glance at his later years.

To James Carlyle, staunch, able stone-mason, sternly religious, was born in small, retired Ecclefechan in southern Scotland, on December 5, 1795, a son—Thomas Carlyle. James Carlyle had wrung from the world an honest but simple living, had built in his thorough fashion the house which sheltered his wife and child, was and remained beholden to no one.

Thomas learned reading from his mother, arithmetic from his father, and other things at the village school and in the study of the village minister. At length, in 1805, he began to learn still other things at the grammar school at Annan, a town south of Ecclefechan. He was quick at learning—a bright boy. Like every bright Scotch church-member's son, he must to the University at Edinburgh and become a minister. And though Edinburgh was far and coach fares were high, his pockets would hold several days' supply of oat-bread, and his legs were strong: he walked the one hundred miles, and entered the University, in 1809. He studied, after his own fashion doubtless, through the four years. He had

friends; yet we should hardly have called him a "good mixer," for he was nicknamed "Dean Jonathan," and the first Dean Jonathan (Swift) "mixed" as a pickle does with candy.

His degree at length secured, with honors, it seems, in mathematics, he had to support himself while he studied further. He studied, endured the grind, and saved money as a tutor or under-teacher in mathematics, first in his old school at Annan, later at another school; meanwhile he complied with the church regulations by preaching two sermons. A girl attracted him, how strongly one may see if he reads of *Blumine* in *Sartor Resartus.* He read, studied, and thought *too much:* he found that he could no longer conscientiously subscribe to the doctrines of his father's church. He had the courage to tell his father so at once. And his father had the wisdom which, in spite of cherished hopes, could understand and approve. Consequently Carlyle foreswore the ministry as his calling in life.

Sick of teaching, wrenched by his decision, determined somehow to win his way, he went again to Edinburgh to study law. The move was bold, and, as it proved, unwise; for inborn tastes and aversions quickly did for the law as conscience had done for the ministry. What to do? He had long been tortured by dyspepsia; there was only a bare living in the odd jobs of tutoring available; the bitter miseries of the ignorant and the poor leered at him everywhere; the religion, the life-scheme which he had abandoned, had given way to mere emptiness and un-

certainty. He thought, as youth and bravery and sensitiveness combined have often thought, of suicide.

We have reached the first year of our central decade. The *Elia Essays* are appearing in London; Hazlitt is in the thick of some glorious quarrels; Irving is studying Master Simon at Bracebridge Hall, Hunt the mysterious art of pig-driving, and De Quincey that vast collection of crude literary material—himself. It is the year, too, when fierce opium pains, involuntarily induced, are racking a hideous fraction of England's people: every parish has its crowd of under-fed, broken-spirited paupers; those wagons, stuck full of gaunt children, rumble northward; probably more than one employer still disregards that new law limiting the daily toil of an eight-year-old child to twelve hours.

It is June 21, 1821, a hot day. Thomas Carlyle is walking out the crowded street which leads to Leith, the seaport of Edinburgh. He is not musing upon Hunt's year-old essay on *A Now. Of a Hot Day.* All the burdens of philosophical and religious uncertainty, all the injustices and sufferings of mankind seem to press upon his shoulders; he is deep in his habitual and weary wrestling with facts and fate. Truth and power seem to lie wholly on the side of suffering and evil and uselessness.

All at once he feels illuminated, strong: it rings in his soul that as for himself he need not, will not surrender to these deadening thoughts; he will believe, he will be, he will do! He calls it his new birth. He thus describes its immediate effect:

"Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed: not Fear or whining Sorrow, but Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance.

"Thus had the *Everlasting No* pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my *Me;* and then was it that my whole *Me* stood up, in naked, God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its Protest. Such a Protest, the most important transaction in Life, may that same Indignation and Defiance, in a psychological point of view, be fitly called. The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's)'; to which my whole Me now made answer: 'I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!'"

And the fearful, cheerful struggle of our decade began.

He had determined to do with his might what lay in him. He said to himself:

"Be no longer a Chaos, but a World, or even Worldkin. Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up! up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called To-day; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."

He had long felt that there lay in him, Thomas Carlyle, ideas worth expressing, and the power to *write*. He now became more and more convinced that he could help solve this riddle of a world with his ideas and his writing. True, two articles already sent to magazines had attained the publicity of the waste-basket. But the German literature, especially the works of Schiller and Goethe, which he had been

reading, and which was known to few English people, seemed to provide a literary opportunity.

Sustenance and encouragement both came. A friend had him appointed tutor in a rich and genteel family; it was exasperating work for so independent a soul as Carlyle, but the two hundred pounds a year were worth some pain. And he met Jane Baillie Welsh, a gifted and sprightly girl; correspondence with her brought sympathy and inspiration. At last the *London Magazine,* its back numbers doubtless still in demand for certain essays signed *Elia* and some lurid *Confessions of an Opium-Eater,* took Carlyle's *Life of Schiller* (1823-4). An Edinburgh publisher soon took his translation of Goethe's *William Meister* (1824). He visited Paris with his patrons and his pupils; also London, and met there many men of letters—Gifford and others like him, probably, also Lamb and Hunt and Hazlitt. They seemed to him mere triflers (he did not know Lamb's real story); he called them "things for writing articles." Dyspepsia, patronage, the turmoil of ideas within him, the unresponsiveness of publishers and people, still bayed at him—life was still hard. But renewed hope was at hand: for Goethe wrote a grateful acknowledgment of the *Meister* translation.

No more of this hateful tutoring, he said at last. Living on his savings he translated and published *German Romances,* and on the slender proceeds he married Jane Welsh and settled in Edinburgh. First a review of a life of Jean Paul Richter, then other articles were accepted by the *Edinburgh Review* and

other magazines. All this was something; but it was slow, slow, and unremunerative. Mrs. Carlyle owned a farm, Craigenputtock, back in the hills beyond Dumfries. Living, they concluded, would be cheaper there and noises less numerous. In 1828 they moved to it.

Here Carlyle prepared more articles. Publishers would have welcomed them if prepared or modified according to their suggestions, their plans. But that was not Carlyle's way; he would not compromise in matter or in manner. Nor was writing in the ordinary sense pleasurable to him; he did not write buoyantly and rapidly, with the pen of a ready writer. Hunt or Hazlitt would have struck off enough to supply the printer for months while Carlyle labored upon a single essay; each article, he says, was "a slow product of a kind of mental agony."

And as this decade of ours rounded out, he was completing (the mental agony at its height, we may be sure) a stupendous work which expressed his now crystallized ideas and theories as no brief magazine articles could express them. He was so certain of its worth that in person he took it up to the London publishers. But no one would buy. Some did give him commissions for more conventional articles, and he sadly returned to Scotland to execute them. At length, in 1833, *Fraser's Magazine,* a liberal and almost anarchical publication of that day, with a really pitiful recompense to the author for his pains, began to issue the great essay serially; and *Sartor Resartus* dribbled into the world.

It met with no gentle indifference. Subscriber after subscriber to that confessedly eccentric magazine begged the editor to use for something valuable the space occupied by this crazy series. Just two readers expressed approval: one was a Catholic priest in Ireland; the other was Ralph Waldo Emerson.

The leaven had begun to work. The ideas which were to mold John Ruskin's life were now expressed. The sympathetic vibrations which still resound were being awakened; for the teachings promulgated by Carlyle in his later life were all contained in brief or in embryo in the early periodical essays and in *Sartor.*

We may quickly chronicle the remaining events of his life. Conversations with John Stuart Mill in London had turned his thoughts to the French Revolution as a literary topic. London was the place to work upon that. So to London, that is, to the suburb of Chelsea, the Carlyles went, bag and baggage, "burning," as Carlyle said, "the Craigenputtock bridges behind them." For three years he struggled with the vast and greatly misunderstood phenomenon he had undertaken to interpret. The destruction of the manuscript of the first volume just after its completion is one of the tragedies of English literature. The *French Revolution* appeared in 1837. It promptly made Carlyle famous. He was asked to give lectures on that and on other subjects. In 1840 came the last series of lectures, expanding a thought contained in *Sartor Resartus,* a series entitled *On Heroes and Hero-Worship. Chartism* (1839), *Past and Present* (1843), *The Nigger Question* (1849), and *Latter-*

Day Pamphlets (1850) made applications of his fundamental beliefs to current problems. *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (1845) and *Frederick the Great* (1857-1865) were studies of great heroes each of whom he had long worshiped. Each was produced after fearful struggles and suffering. Emerson called *Frederick* (five volumes) "the wittiest book ever written," and such is its completeness and accuracy that German military students used it as a text concerning Frederick's battles.

The influence of his writings is illustrated by the fact that the great statue of Cromwell near the Houses of Parliament in London was erected soon after Carlyle had proved the Protector a protector indeed, and not the would-be destroyer of Great Britain. Men often, usually, disagreed with his conclusions and detested his manner and attitude; but he made men *think;* he spoke, as Emerson said, "with an emphasis that hindered from sleep"; as Professor Bliss Perry says, Carlyle put and puts iron into men's blood.

With the completion of *Frederick,* Carlyle practically ended his work. Many honors and sorrows were yet to come. The signal honor of his life came in 1865 when he was chosen to the very honorable office of Rector of Edinburgh University. His inaugural address, delivered April 2, 1866, is considered the ripest and most confident expression of his doctrines which he ever produced. The great sorrow was the death of his wife. Mrs. Carlyle, long a confirmed invalid, had remained behind in London when Carlyle went to Edinburgh to deliver his in-

augural, and Carlyle now visited friends in Scotland. One day the news sped northward to him that Mrs. Carlyle was dead. Her coachman, turning to her for orders as he was driving her about the city, had found her upright but lifeless.

Carlyle was never his real self again. People who have read only Froude's misleading account of Carlyle's treatment of his wife, should read also the section of Carlyle's *Reminiscences* devoted to her. If he had shown her neglect, he had also shown her love and devotion; and for his neglect, he suffered in those later years as few souls are sensitive enough to suffer.

By 1870, Carlyle was the acknowledged head of English letters. In 1874 he was given the Prussian Order of Merit, and the same year he declined Disraeli's delicate offer of the Grand Cross of Bath and a generous pension.

Two years after Mrs. Carlyle's death he had been compelled to give up horseback riding, the only recreation in which he had all his life found mental relief. By 1872, he was no longer able to use his right hand in writing. His close friends, Ruskin, Froude, and Emerson, did much to lighten his last days. And on February 4, 1881, he died. The Dean of Westminster Abbey offered a tomb there; but in accordance with Carlyle's known wishes this offer was declined, and on a grim, snowy day, he was buried among the graves of his peasant kindred in the little churchyard at Ecclefechan.

What he accomplished we cannot yet estimate. The ripples he set in motion still follow one another over

the surface of our life. But people in general seem to be thinking in a fashion less and less feeble, and the man of letters with no message has more and more difficulty in selling his works; and though the poor and the miserable in body and in soul are yet with us, foundlings are in few places farmed out to labor twelve hours a day with the public viewing the spectacle complacently—as they seem to have viewed it in 1820.

It should not be understood that Carlyle was what is called a practical reformer. Howard had secured a measure of prison reform, Wilberforce had freed all slaves on English soil, Dickens was soon to be improving school and workhouse and slum conditions, and Ruskin at length would be exhausting his patrimony in an effort to develop various neglected phases of English civilization. Carlyle's function among these men, as well as among thinkers and workers in nearly all branches of human activity, was for the most part that of a philosopher, a seer, a discoverer and expounder of fundamentals, of those dynamic conceptions upon which true and permanent reforms must be based.

His inheritance and his early training, together with natural *gifts* which no theory of heredity or environment can adequately account for, constituted the soil. His observation and his wide German reading[1] seem to have furnished the seed. And the re-

[1] His philosophy is largely that of Fichte; his style reflects Richter.

sulting growth represented by his writings is perennial and pervading rather than annual and immediate in its significance.

His writings as a whole possess a singular unity; there is oneness, insistency to his message. Hinted, partially proclaimed in his earlier essays, pointedly and vigorously expressed in *Sartor Resartus,* it resounds in one form or another in each of his later works. The reader of Carlyle's essays, few or many, should have in mind a definite conception of this "message" of Carlyle's, of this unity of his writing as a whole.

Above all else Carlyle insists upon looking beyond the Apparent to the Real. Clothes, he reiterates, must not be mistaken for the Man; forms,—in government, in ecclesiastical matters, in the intellectual fields of history and science—must be distinguished from the essence—the State, Religion, God.

In looking beyond the Apparent, Carlyle thought he saw one great neglected fact concerning mankind. It was the reverence which men universally exhibit for Heroes, for those God-given, God-endowed spirits whom to discover and to follow, he considered, is the chief business of all other men. This fact he found dominant in all past history as well as in sore contemporary needs.

Yet another important fact he thought significant of his time—the power exerted by the press and by men of letters. He spoke of letters as constituting a virtual religion, with something of a liturgy of its own, and

with priests in its able and conscientious writers. Upon heroes, in great measure upon heroic men of letters, he felt, depended the salvation of mankind from the forces so insistently working its destruction.

This was a bold, an awakening declaration. As pronounced by Carlyle it compelled attention. It opposed complacency and tacit unthinking acceptance on every side, and consequently brought upon Carlyle not only opposition but ridicule and even hatred. It determined his own career and the nature of his writings. It led him to make and to present studies of heroes; concerning two of the characters he treated, Mahomet and Cromwell, he is acknowledged to have reversed the accepted view, for neither has since been regarded as a dupe.

Carlyle's fundamental conceptions led him also to discredit numerous practical and popular reforms: the extension of suffrage, the American "experiments" in democracy, even the amelioration of prison conditions and the emancipation of slaves. Carlyle was led not so much to deny the need and the advantage of these changes as to emphasize their utter inadequacy for purposes of ultimate reform.

Carlyle's specific teachings have not been accepted. Little, moreover, of the destruction that Carlyle foretold as the penalty for their non-acceptance, has yet come to pass. Much has occurred to indicate, on the contrary, that he was probably wrong in many of the applications of his doctrines to practical affairs. Yet there is perhaps not one of his dicta which can be said to be disproved. And his great principle, the

keynote of his message, the need of looking ever beyond the apparent to the real, is one which the world cannot safely forget, and one which it should ever honor Carlyle for proclaiming.

It is obvious that the essays of Carlyle are far from identical in nature with those of the first essayist, Montaigne. The spirit of Carlyle obviously would not suffer the placing of chief emphasis upon "house and barns . . . father . . . wife . . . tenants . . . old lean bald pate . . . knives and forks, etc." It would be difficult to construct any of these features of Carlyle's experience from what he writes in his essays. There is but one element of marked similarity between them—their sincerity and independence. Whereas these qualities made Montaigne refuse to generalize and prophesy, they induced Carlyle to do that and nothing else.

Consequently in reading Montaigne one thinks primarily of Montaigne, incidentally of the subject discussed; in reading Carlyle one thinks for the most part incidentally of Carlyle, primarily of the subject discussed. The essay in his hands became consistently what it had been intermittently among eighteenth-century essayists—objective.

One species of the objective essay was developed masterfully by Carlyle and his contemporaries. This was the so-called book review. Book reviews had appeared steadily in English periodicals ever since the

first number of *Works of the Learned*[1] in 1681. Eighteenth-century reviews, for the most part the work of hack-writers, had often, strange to say, aroused great attention and had developed bitter animosity and recrimination. Very few of the reviews previous to the nineteenth century, however, had any permanent literary significance.

In 1802, the first number of the *Edinburgh Review* appeared. This magazine included book reviews prepared after a new and better fashion. The founders, Francis Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, and Lord Brougham, had determined that their contributors should not be mere hacks; they were to be well paid, and to be selected for their real knowledge of the subject-matter treated in the book or books reviewed.

Numerous memorable essays have been the result. Each is less a minute consideration of a given book than a disquisition of independent and permanent value on the subject represented by the book. The book suggested to the author of the review an objective essay of his own.

Carlyle's miscellaneous essays, many of them, are of this sort. Even *Sartor Resartus* is ostensibly a lengthy review of a (fictitious) German work. Macaulay's fame as an essayist depends almost wholly upon book reviews of the *Edinburgh Review* type.

This species of objective essay quite naturally led to the wide production of essays not even ostensibly book reviews, but dealing with events or ideas re-

[1] An imitation of the *Journal des savants,* first published in France in 1665.

garded by the writer as significant. Independent treatments, not comprehensive, usually discursive, distinct from romance and poetry and from utilitarian writing, were the result. The essays of Emerson, of Cardinal Newman, and of Lowell are examples.

Of course it is not alone the brevity, the discursiveness, the non-utilitarian quality of these writings which entitles them to be classed as essays. There is in each still a subjective element. Carlyle and Macaulay and Newman, though not the main objects of interest in any, are nevertheless severally present and observable in each essay. Though no longer "painted" in his essays, the writer may be said to be silhouetted there. The objective essay is thus not wholly distinct from the subjective; Montaigne and Emerson are justly classed together as essayists.

With this conception of the objective essay and its relation to the subjective, the reader is prepared to peruse intelligently the essays of Carlyle and of the "objective" essayists who followed him.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY (1800-1859)

Chronology

1800 Born, October 25, at Rothley Temple, Leicestershire. Precocity; memory; writing.
1818 To Trinity College, Cambridge. Speeches at Union. Prizes.
1824 Student at Gray's Inn. Speech, anti-slavery meeting.
1825 *Milton* essay in *Edinburgh Review.*
1826 Admitted to bar.

1830 Elected to Parliament. Speeches on removal of Jewish disabilities, Reform Bill, etc.
1833-1838 Member of supreme council of India. Aid in founding educational system, criminal code, etc. Active in Parliament on return to England; writing.
1842 *Lays of Ancient Rome.* 1843, Collected *Essays.*
1848-1855 *History of England* (4 volumes; incomplete).
1849 Lord Rector of University of Glasgow.
1857 Made Baron Macaulay of Rothley.
1859 Death at home in Kensington. Buried at foot of Addison's statue in Westminster Abbey.

Macaulay is the only important nineteenth century essayist who consistently participated in public affairs, and the only one who is buried in Westminster Abbey. The distinction which he attained in Parliamentary and Cabinet positions seemed to come with very little effort on his part. And the honor of a tomb in the great Abbey, although offered in the face of opposition in the case of Carlyle and in that of Ruskin, was universally accepted as the meed of this popular essayist, orator, poet, historian, and publicist. Son of a comparatively obscure government official, he had become at twenty-five years of age an able essayist, at thirty years a speaker and legislator of mark, at forty-two a popular poet, at forty-eight a distinguished historian, at fifty-seven a peer of the realm heaped with honors and acclaimed with gratitude and admiration wherever he went, whenever he spoke. Surely a brilliant career.

Zachary Macaulay, the father of Thomas Babington Macaulay, had been a clerk in a plantation in the

West Indies, later the virtual governor of the negro colony of Sierra Leone in Africa; and at the time of Macaulay's birth, on October 25, 1800, was in England as secretary of the company in charge of Sierra Leone colony. He later became prominent in the movement to free all the slaves in the British Empire. He was an active, ardent, well-informed man, with literary tastes but no marked literary ability.

The versatility and zeal of the father descended in increased measure upon Macaulay. At three he read incessantly. It was an unusual and a bookish child which spoke the things recorded of him. He was not yet five years old, it is said, when after a servant had spilled some hot coffee over his legs he said in reply to his hostess's tender inquiry: "Thank you, madam, the agony is abated." At about the same age, a housemaid threw away as rubbish some shells with which the child Macaulay had marked out a plot of ground behind the house; when Macaulay found it out, he rushed into the drawing-room and said solemnly to those present: "Cursed be Sally; for it is written, Cursed is he that removeth his neighbor's landmark." At seven years of age he composed a compendium of universal history. Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion* he promptly had by heart. In later life he reproduced obscure verses which he had seen but once as a boy; he felt confident that if all the copies of *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Paradise Lost* should disappear, he could reproduce them *in toto*. All this early display of marvelous ability seems not to have interfered with his boyish enjoy-

ment of life; and his parents never undeceived him in thinking that all boys had such powers. It is little wonder that at school, which he began to attend in 1812, and later (after 1818) at Trinity College, Cambridge, he won honors and prizes of all sorts.

His fellowship at Trinity (1824), and his admission to the bar after a period of study at Gray's Inn, in 1826, are events of little importance to us. That he spoke in mature and praiseworthy fashion at an Anti-Slavery Society meeting in 1824 is of greater importance. And the acceptance of his essay on *Milton* by Jeffrey for the *Edinburgh Review* in 1825 is significant as a leap into publicity and honored prominence.

Notable speeches were given by him at frequent intervals from the time when he was first elected to Parliament in 1830 until he finally retired from it in 1857. The political and legislative activity which these speeches indicate did not, however, prevent him from producing thirty-seven scholarly and altogether notable essays between 1825 and 1845, his famous *Lays of Ancient Rome* in 1842, and five volumes of his *History of England* between 1848 and the time of his death. Enough is indicated concerning his popularity as an author by the fact that his *Lays* and his *History* sold as widely as the poems of Byron and Scott and the novels of Scott and Dickens.

He held important offices in England. He also held office in India where he helped found the educational system of the Indian Empire, and where a code of criminal law and criminal procedure prepared by him in 1837 was later adopted. This last is all the

more remarkable because as a lawyer he had conducted but a single, insignificant case. On the voyage home from India, characteristically enough, in 1838, he learned German.

In politics a Whig, he favored the Reform Bill (1831), the repeal of the Corn Laws (1845), and a bill for limiting the labor of young persons in factories to ten hours a day (1846); but he opposed the extension of copyright privileges to sixty years (1841) and the People's Charter (1842). Early in his career, his inflexibly independent principles kept him from remunerative offices, and on one occasion he sold his University medals to raise money for current expenses (1831). He went down to defeat at an election in Edinburgh rather than give pledges to the voters as to his legislative conduct. His vast success in public life, in other words, seems never to have been attained at the sacrifice of a single principle or scruple.

Macaulay's method of composition is indicated by the following quotation from Trevelyan's *Life:*

"As soon as he had got into his head all the information relating to any particular episode in his *History* (such, for instance, as Argyle's expedition to Scotland, or the attainder of Sir John Fenwick, or the calling in of the clipt coinage), he would sit down and write off the whole story at a headlong pace; sketching the outlines under the genial and audacious impulse of a first conception; and securing in black and white each idea, and epithet, and turn of phrase, as it flowed straight from his busy brain to his rapid fingers. . . . except when at his best, he never would work at all.

"'I had no heart to write,' he says in his journal of March 6, 1851. 'I am too self-indulgent in this matter, it may be:

and yet I attribute much of the success which I have had to my habit of writing only when I am in the humor, and of stopping as soon as the thoughts and words cease to flow fast. There are, therefore, few lees in my wine. It is all the cream of the bottle.'"

While still but a middle-aged man he was seized with heart trouble. And on December 28, 1859, a sudden attack came as he sat in his library chair with the first number of Thackeray's *Cornhill Magazine* open on his lap; so his relatives found him, dead.

The success and versatility of this man in life, the wide sale of his works even to this day, are weighty claims upon our attention and respect. He was truly and highly interesting, fascinating, and admirable. Why may we not class him among the *greatest* of nineteenth-century essayists?

Primarily, it may be maintained, because though not untruthful, he lacked that highest passion for truth which dominates the greatest men. With him effectiveness—secured through charming presentation, through disregard of what seemed to be non-essentials, through stressing and suppressing just a little here and there—effectiveness tends to supplant faithfulness to facts. One cannot fancy him, supposing that people had disapproved of that early Milton essay, persisting, as Carlyle did, in writing what and after what fashion he felt inwardly impelled to write: he would have changed subject and style just a little. He disregarded, or else never saw at all, those features of his vision which would go down hard with people in gen-

eral. He made a hero out of no villain, as Carlyle did with Cromwell; on the contrary, he rather justified the prevailing and somewhat mistaken attitude toward James II and the English Revolutionists.

Mr. Frederic Harrison points out a striking example of these fundamental weaknesses of Macaulay; it is the passage from his essay on *Von Ranke's History of the Popes* describing the venerability of the Papacy as an institution. The extent of its dominions and the comparative ephemeralness of other human institutions are dwelt upon by Macaulay in a paragraph beginning and ending with these words:

"There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. . . . And she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

After dwelling upon the force, the surpassing literary beauty and effectiveness of the passage, Mr. Harrison turns to the successive comparisons instituted by Macaulay and says:

"The passage, though a truism to all thoughtful men, was a striking novelty to English Protestants fifty years ago. But it will hardly bear a close scrutiny of these sweeping, sharp-edged, 'cock-sure' dogmas of which it is composed. The exact propositions it contains may be singly accurate; but as to the most enduring 'work of human policy,' it is fair to remember the Civil Law of Rome has a continuous history of at least twenty-four centuries; that the Roman Empire

from Augustus to the last Constantine in New Rome endured for fifteen centuries; and from Augustus to the last Hapsburg it endured for eighteen centuries. There is a certain ambiguity between the way in which Macaulay alternates between the Papacy and the Christian Church, which are not at all the same thing. The Papacy, as a European or cosmical institution, can hardly be said to have more than twelve centuries of continuous history on the stage of the world. The religious institutions of Confucius and Buddha have twice that epoch; and the religion and institutions of Moses have thirty centuries; and the Califate in some form or other is nearly coeval with the Papacy. The judicious eulogist has guarded himself against denying in words any of these facts; but a cool survey of universal history will somewhat blunt the edge of Macaulay's trenchant phrases."

Viewing the whole essay in a broader way, Mr. Harrison says again:

"But, unfortunately, Macaulay, having stated in majestic antitheses his problem of 'the unchangeable Church,' makes no attempt to provide us with a solution. This splendid eulogium is not meant to convert us to Catholicism—very far from it. Macaulay was no Catholic, and had only a sort of literary admiration for the Papacy. As Mr. Cotter Morison has shown, he leaves the problem just where he found it, and such theories as he offers are not quite trustworthy. He does not suggest that the Catholic Church is permanent because it possesses truth; but, rather, because men's ideas of truth are a matter of idiosyncrasy or digestion. The whole essay is not a very safe guide to the history of Protestantism or of Catholicism."

The contrast between Macaulay and Carlyle is quite clearly seen in the essays written by the two men *On History.* Macaulay's appeared in the *Edinburgh Re-*

view in 1828, Carlyle's in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1830. Each writer had already had some successful experience in writing, each was destined in a few years to do some notable historical writing in accordance with the ideas expressed in his essay.

Each author considers that history in its final analysis is philosophy teaching by examples. But whereas Macaulay assumes that the ability to prognosticate political events may be attained through a study of history, Carlyle regards this practical end as visionary, as an ideal probably forever unattainable. Macaulay encourages the historian through the exercise of his reasoning and his imaginative powers to attempt to convey a reduced but still accurate picture of some remote period. Carlyle warns the historian against attempting to portray any but the smallest sections.

Macaulay insists that the historian must above all possess this combination of reasoning power and imaginative ability; Carlyle urges the historian to develop first of all an understanding of the stupendousness and of the essential impossibility of his task, a consciousness of the whole course of history in the light of which he may depict his small section of time. Most distinctive of all, Macaulay says that history must be interesting as well as true, and compares it to the work of novelists and dramatists; while Carlyle dismisses the question of interestingness as superficial.

Thus, whereas Carlyle leaves with the reader the impression that the past is awe-full, such as to inspire reverence and humility, Macaulay leaves with him the impression that the past is merely baffling and difficult

to comprehend. Carlyle's essay is awakening, stimulating, the message, one feels, of a seer; Macaulay's essay presents the ordinary view in clear, exquisite, convincing form.

Emerson puts very strongly the whole aspect of Macaulay, of which his essay on history is but a single expression, in a passage in *English Traits,* a work written when Macaulay was at the height of his power and popularity:

"The brilliant Macaulay, who expresses the tone of the English governing classes of the day, explicitly teaches that *good* means good to eat, good to wear, material commodity; that the glory of modern philosophy is its direction on 'fruit'; to yield economical inventions; and that its merit is to avoid ideas, and avoid morals. He thinks it the distinctive merit of the Baconian philosophy, in its triumph over the old Platonic, its disentangling the intellect from theories of the all-fair and all-Good, and pinning it down to the making a better sick-chair and a better wine-whey for an invalid; this not ironically, but in good faith; that 'solid advantage,' as he calls it, meaning always sensual benefit, is the only good. The eminent benefit of astronomy is the better navigation it creates, to enable the fruit-ships to bring home their lemons and wine to the London grocer. It was a curious result, in which the civility and religion of England for a thousand years ends in denying morals, and reducing the intellect to a saucepan."

Enough has now been said concerning what Macaulay is not. That the reader needs to be on his guard, can withstand some derogatory criticism, will appear the moment he begins to read from this brilliant man's works. Macaulay's careful yet not obtrusive struc-

ture, his utilization of vivid details, and his employment of suspense, of climax, or repetition, of verbal ornament, will ever create a valiant and well-fortified Macaulay following. His mode of expression, all will freely grant, is a safer model than Carlyle's. It is said that all our best newspaper and magazine writing to-day follows examples set by Macaulay. And if we may not depend upon him for absolute and final dicta nor yet for a stimulus to great or new thoughts, we may still read him as a nineteenth-century essayist of brilliance, fluency, and charm.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801-1890)

Chronology

1801 Born, February 21, in London.
1816 "Conversion."
1816 To Trinity College, Oxford. 1818, Trinity scholarship. *Encyclopedia Metropolitana* articles. Friends—churchmen.
1827 Preacher at Whitehall, public examiner in classics.
1828 Vicar of St. Mary's Church, Oxford.
1832 Trip to southern Europe. *Lead, Kindly Light* (1833).
1834-1841 *Tracts for the Times;* Oxford Movement.
1843 Resigned living at St. Mary's.
1845 Received into Roman Catholic Church. Preaching and lecturing.
1851 Lost suit occasioned by exposing apostate monk, Achilli. Public support of his cause.
1854 Rector of new Catholic University, Dublin.
1854 Controversy with Charles Kingsley: *Apologia pro vita sua.*
1874 Controversy with Gladstone: *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk.*

1877 Elected honorary fellow of Trinity College.
1879 Created Cardinal.
1890 Died, August 11.

Of the merely interesting which tired minds crave, there is little in the works of John Henry, Cardinal Newman. Yet an account of the nineteenth century would be vastly incomplete with him omitted, just as an account of life would be incomplete if it omitted the things with which Newman's life was chiefly concerned and for which in literature he stands. It is well to emphasize the distinguishing feature of Newman among essayists.

We have seen that the nineteenth-century essayists previous to Carlyle were men aloof from life, men who for the most part took little cognizance of contemporary problems and struggles, men whose works we may search almost in vain for any definite reflection of what in the early nineteenth century men of England and America were seriously discussing. In contrast to these men, we saw Carlyle early in life painfully examining the signs of the times, determining as best he could the needs which they indicated, and striving mightily to do his part as a man of letters in meeting those needs. We saw Macaulay giving, during most of his life, only his spare hours to literature, and taking the part of a statesman in dealing with slavery, with political reform, with India, Ireland, copyright, and so on.

We shall now find this participating spirit, new to essayists of the nineteenth century, exemplified in John

Henry, later Cardinal, Newman; we shall find that the special field in which circumstances and natural capacity led him to labor was that of religion, of churches and theology. Newman was more than a preacher, more than a theologian; but we find in his religious thinking and activities the source and secret of all that is interesting in his life and powerful in his writings.

Most people, doubtless, do not consider at all the respective merits of different creeds. Of those who are inclined to weigh and choose, to abandon one creed in favor of another, most doubtless come to conclude with Stevenson that to do so would be to change "only words for other words," and are satisfied with him "by some brave reading to embrace it [the old] in spirit and truth, and find wrong as wrong for me as for the best of other communions." Newman was different. To him this affair of churches and religion was inseparably bound up with life, indeed the chief concern of life. One cannot imagine Newman writing Macaulay's cold, impartial sketch of the Papacy. To stand off and look at that subject as Macaulay did, to be concerned so wholly with outward manifestations—numbers, progress, checks, prospects—would have been for him as unnatural as at the Day of Judgment to examine the material and workmanship of Gabriel's trumpet or to observe the size and the disposition of the cohorts of the heavenly host. Newman from a child was of such temper and mental attitude that he would first have considered the credentials of Gabriel and the cohorts, then would

have sought to understand their message in all its phases, and finally would have vied with the holiest saint in sincere worship and intelligent service of the Almighty.

Macaulay accepted the religion which he had inherited, and while he wrote enthusiastically of an alien religion, continued placidly and regularly to attend his parish church. Newman from the first examined the tenets of his native religion, sought to establish them firmly wherever he found them weak, and at length, in middle age, finding that impossible, gave up position, friends, followers, and reputation, and publicly vowed allegiance to what he had then come to believe the true guide in faith and worship.

Newman and Carlyle present a strange and interesting contrast. They were alike in many respects. Each was thoughtful, serious, analytically and speculatively religious by nature; each as a young man experienced what he called a conversion—a vast upheaval of spiritual consciousness which gave form and character to his entire life. There the similarity ends. Carlyle settled his beliefs once for all; they were concerned with broad principles only: "The world is not the Devil's," he said to himself, "but God's. Thy proper pursuit is not happiness, but work—the best that lieth in thee. The learned, the strong, the gifted—they are those appointed to lead mankind. Forth in this faith, strive, fight, lead!" Newman also determined certain broad principles—the oneness of God and truth, the church God's instrument in the world; but most of his life was spent in defending details of

his beliefs—the Anglican Church, its doctrines, its ritual; later, the Catholic Church, and the superiority of its claims.

Carlyle recognized the church as a vesture; he acknowledged its importance as such, possessed himself of the reality which it clothed, and never bothered to enfold himself in that vesture, to maintain it in wholeness and beauty by attending or supporting any church institution. Newman, too, recognized the church as a vesture, but as such indispensable, the prime concern of all earnest men, to be perfected, purified, glorified. Carlyle may be considered the acme of pious dissent, Newman the acme of intelligent conformity.

Distinguished from ordinary men of letters by his seriousness and sincerity, from Macaulay by the oneness, the integrity of his intellectual and his religious faculties, and from Carlyle by the different practical bearing of his whole-souled convictions, it was a life of struggle, of bitterness, that Newman had to live. The term applied to a man who forsakes his religion is *apostate;* it is almost as reproachful and contemptuous as *deserter* or *traitor.* And even when we remember that him whom George III called traitor, others called patriot, that an apostate to one religion is the welcome convert to another, we know that in both cases heart-burnings, uncertainty, sore wrenchings within oneself, misunderstanding, vilification, recrimination from others are inevitably involved. All these Newman had to endure. He endured them all with serene calmness, kindness, sweetness. He stands like a colossal, full-

surpliced priest in the midst of a hurrying, week-day, clamorous throng.

When John Henry Newman entered Trinity College, Oxford, in 1816, he was already well furnished with religious opinions. He was the son of a pious London banker; he had learned to love Scott and the Bible; he was imaginative, and in a way superstitious—he had formed a habit of crossing himself whenever he entered a dark room. His "conversion," which had recently occurred, was not, like Carlyle's, an illumination proceeding from a single great idea, but the firm and final acceptance of certain dogmas or doctrines—the doctrine of "final perseverance," the doctrines of eternal punishment and eternal happiness, and the conviction that his "calling in life would involve such a sacrifice as celibacy involved." His reading, moreover, had convinced him that the Pope was the Antichrist foretold by Daniel, St. Paul, and St. John.

In 1818 he distinguished himself by winning a Trinity scholarship; but when he had completed his course he was so exhausted from overwork that instead of securing the high honors almost within his grasp, he barely qualified for his degree. Private pupils occupied him at Oxford until in 1822 he redeemed his reputation as a scholar by winning a fellowship at Oriel College. Studying, lecturing, writing here, he qualified as a clergyman, and was chosen in 1827 preacher at Whitehall and public examiner in the

classics, and, in 1828, vicar of St. Mary's, the University Church. So far, comparative harmony.

By 1832, however, his carefully deliberated opinions on several topics—the function of a tutor among them—had resulted in such disagreement with the authorities that he resigned his position at Oriel. With a friend he traveled on the Continent, especially in Italy and in the islands of the Mediteranean. The Catholic religion as he observed its influence there seemed to him "degrading and idolatrous." He composed many poems; one of them, written while he was becalmed for a week on an orange-boat bound from Sicily to Marseilles, was *Lead, Kindly Light.*

By the time Newman returned to England in 1833, the destruction which Carlyle had foretold for all existing institutions, seemed really about to seize the Anglican Church. The new Parliament, that elected under the Reform Bill of 1832, was at work; one of its acts, as supreme over church and state, was to abolish ten Irish bishoprics. Many people regarded this as the first step in a thorough-going revolutionary process which should eventually compass the complete separation of the Church from the state. A friend of Newman's, John Keble, preached a startling sermon at Oxford on what he called the "national apostasy." Good and learned Churchmen, Newman among them, met together and determined to fight for the Church's threatened integrity, for its doctrines and its practices. They felt that the Anglican Church had inherited, and was fully entitled to occupy, a more exalted position than it had ever occupied; it would be

their duty and their delight, they concluded, to convince others, within and without the Church, of this fact.

The meeting of these loyal Churchmen was the beginning and their purpose was the purpose of what has been called the Oxford Movement, the effort of some scholarly adherents of the Church, most of them in residence at Oxford, to rehabilitate and exalt the Church of England in England. The movement was advanced chiefly through a series of short papers, by Newman and others, called *Tracts for the Times.* In them the creed of the Church, the significance of the Church's establishment and of its history, its claim that it is the direct and legitimate successor of the early Christian Church—all these were keenly and thoroughly discussed. Newman preached in the same vein in St. Mary's Chapel, Oxford.

Many good Churchmen were bewildered by the extent of the claims made by the "Tractarians," many denounced them as preposterous, many were convinced of their justice and importance. The most lasting result of the Movement was the revivifying of the Established Church, a renewal of vigor and serviceableness which seems to have extended to the remotest parishes and the most insignificant phases of the Church's activity. Finally, the most startling result of the Movement was the conversion of Newman himself, through the very processes of thought which had led him to exalt the Anglican Church, to the Roman Catholic religion. We need consider only a few facts relating to the event.

The whole trend of Newman's teaching in *Tracts for the Times* was toward establishing for the Anglican Church the same authority, the same authenticity which the Roman Catholic Church claimed. His enemies had long maintained that he was virtually a Catholic—and to most Englishmen of that day, being a Catholic was still almost as bad, though not so illegal, as being a thief or a traitor. These critics were to be confirmed in their declaration. *Tract 90,* the last of the series, which appeared in 1841, had for its thesis that the Thirty-Nine Articles oppose not the teaching, in only slight measure the dogma, simply the dominant errors of Rome. This was far less orthodox than anything that had yet been maintained. It developed rabid opposition, the bitterest calumny. Newman pursued his thoughts and his studies regardless of all criticism. By 1843 he had felt compelled to resign his office as preacher at St. Mary's, and had written a retraction of what in his early writings he had said against Rome and now saw to be unfounded. As he wrote these retractions, the last lingering doubt as to his proper course finally disappeared; in 1845 he was received into the Catholic Church, and the next year he quitted Oxford.

It is obvious how this step would make Newman figure in other men's minds. Their contempt and hatred appeared in several ways. In 1851, Newman saw fit to expose the moral turpitude of a certain "converted" monk named Achilli; he was sued for libel; his carefully prepared defense proved inadequate under the circumstances, and he was fined one

hundred pounds. This sum, together with his expenses of some 14,000 pounds, was raised by popular subscription—not wholly among Catholics. Two other illustrations of the attitude of most English people will be mentioned later.

Newman had planned to live a life of obscure devotion and service in his new religious relations; when a district of England was isolated on account of an epidemic of cholera, Newman with a few others insisted upon remaining in the neighborhood and doing all that could be done for the victims of the disease. His learning and talents, however, were too remarkable and too widely known for him to remain in obscurity. He was in demand as a preacher and lecturer before Catholic bodies. He was honored by the Pope with various offices and duties.

His own nature led him to give particular attention to the means of education provided for Catholics. In 1854 he was given the honorable and responsible position of Rector of the new Catholic University at Dublin. Organizing such an institution was a work for which Newman was poorly fitted; it proved, moreover, to be a forlorn project on other grounds, and within a few years it was abandoned. Newman's lectures, published under the title of *Idea of a University,* constitute, however, a notable and lasting outcome of this educational experiment.

We come now to what was perhaps the most painful experience in Newman's life, the one, moreover, which called forth his best-known literary work. In 1864 an anonymous reviewer in a book review of

Froude's *History of England* in *Macmillan's Magazine* took occasion to say:

"Truth, for its own sake, had never been a virtue with the Roman clergy. Father Newman informs us that it need not, and on the whole ought not to be; that cunning is the weapon which Heaven has given to the saints wherewith to withstand the brute male force of the wicked world which marries and is given in marriage. Whether his notion be doctrinally correct or not, it is at least historically so."

Newman protested to the editors. The writer, Rev. Professor Charles Kingsley, acknowledged to Newman the authorship of the article, and they corresponded on the subject. Kingsley virtually failed to prove or to retract. Newman published their correspondence. Kingsley published a pamphlet. Then Newman published, in a series of pamphlets, his famous *Apologia pro vita sua* (1864), recounting his religious experiences and maintaining that it was his very love of truth which had led him all along. It is said that the *Apologia* does not vindicate the Catholic Church on Kingsley's charge; but it is universally acknowledged that the book establishes for all time the honesty and rectitude of the man Newman. The book is generally considered as a record of religious experience comparable only to St. Augustine's *Confessions*.

Newman was to be subjected to yet one more attack, likewise of nation-wide publicity and importance. This time the blow came from the statesman and religious controversialist, Gladstone, writing in the *Contemporary Review* in 1874. Gladstone maintained that no one

could become converted to Rome without renouncing moral and intellectual freedom, and, what was of more practical importance, civil allegiance. In his *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk,* Newman expressed a vigorous, dignified, and effective denial of these charges. They seem never to have been seriously and intelligently repeated against Catholics since that time.

How much of the forbearance, the mutual respect, and appreciation which to-day characterize Catholics and Protestants in their relations with each other, may be due to the intelligence, the frankness, and the sincerity of Cardinal Newman, it is impossible to say. It is easy to believe that Newman's contribution to this result is considered by the Recording Angel a substantial item.

Honors, approved successively by more and more Protestants, were now heaped upon Newman. In 1878 he was elected honorary fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, and revisited the University after thirty-two years of absence. In 1879 he was created Cardinal. And in 1880 he preached at Oxford. He died, August 11, 1890.

Three expressions which are said to have been current at Oxford when Newman entered the University, seem to emphasize, by their contrast to expressions of our attitude to-day—whatever other features may characterize our attitude—what Newman and his labor for religion and the Church have accomplished. Not a few students at Oxford in the '20's are said to have concluded that "there is nothing new, nothing true,

and it doesn't matter"; not many of us *can* conclude that for long. Young aspirants for church positions in the '20's are said to have been seriously counseled to "improve their Greek and let go visiting the poor." There are few young men to-day who would not indignantly reject such abominable counsel. "O God," many of those students are said actually or virtually to have prayed, "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul." Newman has helped us, more and more consistently, either boldly to silence the entire prayer or intelligently to eliminate the equivocating "ifs" in it.

Newman surely erected a barrier against the drift toward atheism. He demonstrated, moreover, that intelligent faith and earnest works must go together. And he helped to make hypocrisy in the guise of outward conformity appear properly detestable. What more he accomplished, how completely right he was in his conclusions as to details, time alone can tell. The intensity, the earnestness, the intellectuality of the nineteenth century, we may safely conclude, are largely explained by the existence and the activity of Cardinal Newman.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803-1882)

Chronology

1803 Born, May 25, in Boston, Massachusetts. Clergyman ancestry. Mary Moody Emerson, his aunt.

1804 Father and others founded *Monthly Anthology and Boston Review* (forerunner of *North American Review*).

1817 Graduated from Boston Latin School.

1817-1821 At Harvard College. School teaching. Studies.
1826 Approbated to preach, Unitarian.
1830 Pastor of Second Unitarian Church, Boston. Married Miss Tucker. 1831, Death of wife. 1832, Resigned pastorate—ill-health and scruples. Visited England and Continent, and met Carlyle.
1835 Married Miss Jackson. Settled in Concord. Lectures. *Nature* published (500 copies, thirteen years).
1837 Address on *The American Scholar* before Harvard Phi Beta Kappa society.
1838 Harvard Divinity School Address; orthodox animosity.
1840 *The Dial* begun; 1844ff., Emerson its editor.
1841 *Essays,* First Series; 1844, *Essays,* Second Series.
1846 *Poems.*
1847 Lecture tour in England and Scotland.
1850 *Representative Men.* 1856, *English Traits.*
1860 *Conduct of Life* (edition exhausted in forty-eight hours).
1867 *May Day and Other Poems.* 1870, *Society and Solitude.*
1875 *Letters and Social Aims.*
1882 Died at Concord, April 27.

In 1824 a Cambridge, Massachusetts, school teacher and divinity student, just come of age, wrote in his journal as follows:

"Apart from the vastness of transitory volumes which occasional politics or a thousand ephemeral magnalia elicit, . . . there is another sort of book which appears now and then in the world, once in two or three centuries perhaps, and which soon or late gets a foothold in popular esteem. I allude to those books which collect and embody the wisdom

of their times, and so mark the stages of human improvement. Such are the Proverbs of Solomon, the Essays of Montaigne, and eminently the Essays of Bacon. . . . I should like to add another volume to this valuable work. I am not so foolhardy as to write *Sequel to Bacon* on my title-page; and there are some reasons that induce me to suppose that the undertaking of this enterprise does not imply any censurable arrogance."

Other men have repeatedly written—what this man's modesty kept him from writing—*Sequel to Bacon,* or words to that effect, on the title-pages of the books of essays which he came to write. They call him the most original thinker since Bacon, "the Columbus of modern thought." His name was Ralph Waldo Emerson. We must try to understand why men assign to him so important a place.

Carlyle, as has been pointed out, in the midst of those political, social, and religious difficulties of 1820-1830, concluded that the structure of society was breaking down, the whole fabric being consumed. He saw, nevertheless, some hopeful features. New political and social conditions, he said, would result from the great human facts of heroism and hero-worship. A new and glorious religion, moreover, was certain, he said, to develop from literature, with its pulpit set up wherever there was a printing-press, and one great Priest-Prophet already apparent in Goethe—one "to whom the Godlike had revealed itself, through all meanest and highest forms of the Common; and by him been again prophetically revealed; in whose inspired melody . . . Man's life again begins . . . to

be divine." Assuming the existence of this religion of letters, we may conclude that some future historian of its Fathers will treat next to Goethe, Carlyle; and next, one as great as either of the others,—Emerson.

May we assume the existence of a religion, a church, embodied in literature? We must admit, Carlyle would have had to admit, that the ultimate destruction of other embodiments of religion, other churches, has at least been postponed. But judging broadly, on the most obvious facts, with the spread of popular education, the increase in the number of the reading public, the character and volume of printed ideas which are circulated, may not Carlyle's prophecy be said to be being fulfilled? Is there a modern sermon which in circulation, influence, plain every-day effect upon life is to be compared with Newman's *Lead, Kindly Light,* Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar,* or Kipling's *Recessional?* How does the audience reached by even the most obscure literary expression—magazine article or story, newspaper editorial or item—compare with the congregation reached by the most largely attended church service or the most popular preacher? The question would not have arisen in 1814.

This is all germane to the subject of Emerson and his position in American literature and American life. Carlyle, finding himself unable to subscribe to the doctrines of any church, devoted himself to literature. Emerson, after proving that he could preach acceptably, deliberately forsook the ministry in order

that he might be priest and preacher of the religion which speaks in print.

What was the result? A thoughtful and observing Englishman who visited this country late in Emerson's life, after touring the country for some time, reported that he had heard many sermons but only one preacher—Emerson. Now those preachers did not all know that they were preaching Emerson's thoughts; his writings had permeated and leavened men's minds; the old church had become the mouthpiece of the new. It could probably be shown that in so far as the preaching of to-day in all denominations differs from what it was a hundred years ago, the difference is largely Emerson.

Of course, the vast influence of Emerson is exhibited only partly in what we think of as church matters. This religion of literature which he promoted is catholic as life, as mankind. It is difficult to be specific in describing his influence. We are still too near to him to distinguish it clearly. It could be safely maintained and clearly established, for one thing, however, that the most significant movement in education in the nineteenth century, the institution and progress of the elective system, may be traced to ideas inculcated by Emerson.[1] If men accepted his

[1] "Charles W. Eliot, ex-President of Harvard University, eminent educator and man of affairs, says: 'As a young man I found the writings of Emerson unattractive, and not seldom unintelligible. . . . But when I had got at what proved to be my lifework for education, I discovered in Emerson's poems and essays all the fundamental motives and principles of my hourly struggle against educational routine and tradition.'" From *Emerson,* by D. L. Maulsby, Tufts College, Mass., 1911, p. 164.

views—as they were sure sooner or later to do—a high degree of freedom in choice of studies was as inevitable as the lapse of time.

Consider another specific case. It is difficult for us to get Hazlitt's point of view in *On the Ignorance of the Learned.* "Learning is," says Hazlitt, "in too many cases, but a foil to common sense; a substitute for true knowledge. Books are less often made use of as 'spectacles' to look at nature with, than as blinds to keep out its strong light and shifting scenery from weak eyes and indolent dispositions. The book-worm wraps himself up in his web of verbal generalities, and sees only the glimmering shadows of things reflected from the minds of others. Nature *puts him out.*" We do not so regard what we call learning. What is the explanation? It is partly that Emerson has lived and written and influenced men since Hazlitt wrote. Most of Emerson's writing not only illustrates but emphasizes positively what Hazlitt emphasized negatively. Learning, says Hazlitt, is folly; learning, says Emerson, should be, must be wisdom. "Nature," says Hazlitt, "puts him [the learned man] out!" Nature, said Emerson in his first work, and repeatedly through his life, should and must be the learned man's chief object of study and contemplation. Not books only or chiefly, but the face of nature, men, himself, must the student be concerned with.

See further wherein Hazlitt says the learned (he included most literary men of his time) fell short:

"Learning is the knowledge of that which is not generally known to others, and which we can only derive at second-

hand from books or other artificial sources. The knowledge of that which is before us, or about us, which appeals to our experience, passions, and pursuits, to the bosoms and businesses of men, is not learning. Learning is the knowledge of that which none but the learned know. He is the most learned man who knows the most of what is farthest removed from common life and actual observation, that is of the least practical utility, and least liable to be brought to the test of experience . . ."

Are not these the very things that learned men are to-day primarily or ultimately concerned with? Emerson has made necessary a footnote to the term "learning" as used by Hazlitt. The philosophical lectures and writings of President Hyde and Professor Bergson, the few poems which are widely read, the essays and the many novels and stories—all are alike in this, that they appeal "to our experience, passions, and pursuits, to the bosoms and businesses of men," that they are human in the extreme. The criticism of learning voiced by Hazlitt is still occasionally repeated, but it is the one which men in every intellectual realm, seriously and deeply applied, regard as damning.

This does not mean that Emerson was a mere utilitarian. It was the highest wisdom which he found and which he taught others to find in the things of daily life. Witness this gleaming passage from *Civilization*:

"Civilization depends upon morality. Everything good in man leans on what is higher. This rule holds in small as in great. Thus all our strength and success in the work of our hands depends on our borrowing the aid of the elements. You have seen a carpenter on a ladder with a broad-axe

chopping upward chips from a beam. How awkward! At what disadvantage he works! But see him on the ground, dressing his timber under him. Now, not his feeble muscles but the force of gravity brings down the axe; that is to say, the planet itself splits his stick. The farmer had much ill-temper, laziness and shirking to endure from his hand-sawyers, until one day he bethought him to put his saw-mill on the edge of a waterfall; and the river never tires of turning his wheel; the river is good-natured, and never hints an objection. . . . I admire still more than the saw-mill the skill which on the sea-shore makes the tides drive the wheels and grind corn, and which thus engages the assistance of the moon, like a hired hand, to grind, and wind, and pump, and saw, and split stone, and roll iron.

"Now that is the wisdom of a man, in every instance of his labor, to hitch his wagon to a star, and see his chore done by the gods themselves. That is the way we are strong, by borrowing the might of the elements. The forces of steam, gravity, galvanism, light, magnets, wind, fire, serve us day by day and cost us nothing. . . .

"All our arts aim to win this vantage. We cannot bring the heavenly powers to us, but if we will only choose our jobs in directions in which they travel, they will undertake them with the greatest pleasure. It is a peremptory rule with them that *they never go out of their road.* We are dapper little busybodies and run this way and that way superserviceably; but they swerve never from their foreordained paths,—neither the sun, nor the moon, nor a bubble of air, nor a mote of dust. . . .

"Hitch your wagon to a star. Let us not fag in paltry works which serve our pot and bag alone. Let us not lie and steal. No god will help. We shall find all their teams going the other way,—Charles's Wain, Great Bear, Orion, Leo, Hercules: every god will leave us. Work rather for those interests which the divinities honor and promote—justice, love, freedom, knowledge, utility."

Such teaching, such an example, has had an influence upon thought and action since Emerson wrote it. Lowell in his *A Fable for Critics* characterizes Emerson as:

> "A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range
> Has Olympus for one pole, for t'other the Exchange."

Few men since Emerson are inactive in the region typified by "the Exchange"; more and more men, there is reason to believe, since his time, range near to Olympus as well.

This account of Emerson's activity and influence in the pulpit of letters is an important preliminary to a detailed account of his life. The effect of the whole cannot be adequately conveyed by a scrutiny of the parts. Keep in mind the significance of the teachings of this calm, active, self-reliant and far-seeing man, as we see where and how he lived and was successively employed.

Ralph Waldo Emerson's father had been pastor of the Congregational Church at Concord, Massachusetts, during the Revolution. Later he had become pastor of the First Church of Boston. In Boston Ralph Waldo, the second of five sons, was born on May 25, 1803. Seven distinguished clergymen are said to have been among the boy's immediate ancestors. His father was prominent in the small but brilliant group of men of literary tastes then in Boston, and became editor of *The Monthly Anthology and Boston Review,* established in 1804, the precursor of the *North*

American Review (established in 1815). That the literary activity indicated by all this was considerable we shall find evidence.

Emerson attended the Boston Grammar School, the Boston Latin School, and from 1817 to 1821, Harvard College. More important in its influence upon him than any of these experiences was the intellectual companionship of his aunt, Mary Moody Emerson, a gifted though eccentric woman of wide reading and exquisite taste. In college he stood high, but not among the highest; he took but a second prize in a senior essay-competition, and he consented to write the class poem at graduation after the honor had been declined in turn by *seven* others. His real activities during these days are exhibited in his *Journal:* the nature and the variety of his reading, his long, long thoughts, his experiments in composition, in self-expression.

In his vacations he taught school, for his family was poor; and on graduating from college he continued to teach, and at the same time studied for his father's profession, the ministry. Without completing his formal studies he was approbated as a preacher of the Unitarian Church in 1826.

Emerson's *Journal* refers very early to the essays which were appearing from time to time by one T. Carlyle, a Scotch contributor to the *Edinburgh Review* and other reviews. But before Carlyle had begun to preach audibly, some of the doctrines he was to stress had been acted upon by Emerson. Almost simultaneously these two men, on opposite sides of the Atlan-

tic, were actuated by some of the same great principles. That doctrine of piercing through the superficial to the essence, early dominated Emerson. As a successful preacher in Boston, it led him to question, not lightly, but deeply and seriously, two features of the church services. One of these features was the custom of offering prayer. He says:

"That it is right to ask God's blessing on us is certainly reasonable. That it is right to enumerate our wants, our sins, even our sentiments, in addresses to this unseen Idea, seems just and natural. And it may probably be averred with safety that there has been no man who never prayed. That persons whom like circumstances and like feelings assimilate, that a family, that a picked society of friends, should unite in this service, does not, I conceive, violate any precept of just reason. It certainly is a question of more difficult solution whether a promiscuous assemblage such as is contained in houses of public worship, and collected by such motives, can unite with propriety to advantage in any petition such as is usually offered by one man. . . .

"The man who prays is in quite another mood from the man who hears, and tones and language which we have once become accustomed to regard with suspicion or at best with admiration, it will be long ere we learn to listen to them with sympathy. The truth is, public prayer is rather the offspring of our notions of what *ought* to be, than of what *is*. It has grown out of the sentiment of a few, rather than the reason of many."

The other feature was the periodical celebration of the Communion. Emerson came to the conclusion that it had not been intended by Christ for a perpetual institution.

Other beliefs which he had acquired made him trust his own judgment as to these two. He says further in his *Journal:*

"Hypocrisy is the attendant of false religion. When people imagine that others can be their priests, they may well fear hypocrisy. Whenever they understand that no religion can do them any more good than they can actually taste, they have done fearing hypocrisy."

"I suppose it is not wise, not being natural, to belong to any religious party. In the Bible you are not directed to be a Unitarian, or a Calvinist, or an Episcopalian. Now if a man is wise, he will not only not profess himself to be a Unitarian, but he will say to himself, I am not a member of that or of any party. I am God's child, a disciple of Christ, or, in the eye of God, a fellow-disciple with Christ."

"The great difficulty is that men do not think enough of themselves, do not consider what it is that they are sacrificing, when they follow in a herd, or when they cater for their establishment. They know not how divine is a man. . . . A man should learn to detect and foster that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within far more than the luster of the whole firmament without. Yet he dismisses without notice his peculiar thought because it is peculiar. The time will come when he will postpone all acquired knowledge to this spontaneous wisdom, and will watch for this illumination more than those who watch for the morning."

It is plain to what this Carlylean habit (not imitated from Carlyle, remember, but likewise native to Emerson) of *seeing* was leading Emerson: Rely upon your own flashes of insight, sects are to say the least superfluous, certain religious customs are unfounded

and unwise. Soon he wrote: "I have sometimes thought that, in order to be a good minister, it was necessary to leave the ministry." When this crisis in his thought was reached he first retired to the White Mountains to think it over carefully, then preached a simple sermon from his pulpit in the Second Church in Boston, stating his views and his inability to continue as minister if the church customs remained unchanged. His *Journal* records the outcome: the proposed changes were voted down, and his resignation was accepted. This was in 1832. Henceforth Emerson was to be a minister outside the church, a preacher from the free and broad lecture platform, a high priest of the religion of letters.

The literary circle to which Emerson like his father belonged, the patrons of early American reviews, read with great attention the English reviews. Emerson, as has been said, had been early attracted by different articles in the *Edinburgh Review* from the hand, which he promptly came to recognize, of a certain "Germanick light writer." He records in October, 1832:

"I am cheered and instructed by this paper on Corn Law Rhymes in the *Edinburgh* by my Germanick new-light writer, whoever he be. He gives us confidence in our principles. He assures the truth-lover everywhere of sympathy. Blessed art that makes books, and so joins me to that stranger by this perfect railroad."

"If Carlyle knew what an interest I have in his persistent goodness, would it not be worth one effort more, one prayer, one meditation? But will he resist the Deluge of bad example in England? One manifestation of goodness in a

noble soul brings him in debt to all the beholders that he shall not betray their love and trust which he has awakened."

The character of this young periodical writer and the prospect of seeing other loved authors—Wordsworth and Coleridge among them, together with his need of rest and variety after his recent critical experiences, led Emerson to travel in Europe. He says at the beginning of *English Traits:*

"Like most young men at that time, I was much indebted to the men of Edinburgh and of the *Edinburgh Review*—to Jeffrey, Mackintosh, Hallam, and to Scott, Playfair, and De Quincey; and my narrow and desultory reading had inspired the wish to see the faces of three or four writers,—Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, De Quincey, and the latest and strongest contributor to the critical journals, Carlyle; and I suppose if I had sifted the reasons that led me to Europe, when I was ill and was advised to travel, it was mainly the attraction of these persons."

In 1833 Emerson returned to America, and set seriously to work upon a series of essays which should convey the kernel of his best thinking. The spirit in which he wrought is indicated by this entry in his *Journal* in November, 1834:

"Henceforth I design not to utter any speech, poem or book that is not entirely and peculiarly my work. I will say at public lectures and the like, those things which I have meditated for their own sake and not for the first time with a view to that occasion."

His work as a thinker and a writer was facilitated by his removal to Concord to live in 1835. That year his series of essays appeared: the title, *Nature,* indicated what it emphasized. Carlyle wrote him:

"Your little azure-colored *Nature* gave me true satisfaction. I read it, and then lent it about to all my acquaintances that had a sense for such things; from whom a similar verdict always came back. You say it is the first chapter of something greater. I call it rather the Foundation and Ground-plan on which you may build whatsoever of great and true has been given you to build. It is the true Apocalypse, this when the 'Open Secret' becomes revealed to a man. I rejoice much in the glad serenity of soul with which you look out on this wondrous dwelling-place of yours and mine—with an ear for the *Ewigen Melodien* which pipe in the winds round us, and utter themselves forth in all sounds and sights and things: not to be written down by gamut-machinery; but which all right writing is a kind of attempt to write down."

These two friends, Carlyle and Emerson, were rapidly cementing their relation. Emerson tried in vain to persuade Carlyle to give lectures in America. But in 1836 he did publish an American edition of *Sartor Resartus*—shorn of the eccentricity, dear to Carlyle, of frequent capital letters; and the sum of money realized by the sale, accounted for in honest Yankee fashion, was a most welcome benison to Carlyle. Emerson edited an edition of Carlyle's *Essays* also, in 1836.

Two notable addresses were the next important fruits of Emerson's retirement. Each may almost

be said to have resounded through the century. In 1837 he gave as the Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard an address on *The American Scholar.* It reiterated one of the thoughts of *Nature,* the thought that true knowledge must be sought through direct contact with things, with nature; it also declared that American scholars, hitherto the obsequious imitators of European thinkers, owed it to themselves and to the world to proceed upon the new principle of scholarship. The speech has been called the declaration of American intellectual independence.

The other address created bitterness. It was delivered at the Harvard Divinity School in 1838. Emerson pointed out certain ways in which it seemed to him that religion and God were being misrepresented by contemporary thinkers and preachers. He urged the divinity students not to withdraw, however, from established sects and institutions (as he himself had felt obliged to do), but to transform, to enlarge them from within. Orthodox church people now centered upon Emerson the fire of criticism and denunciation which had previously been directed against the Unitarians as a sect. They called him a deist and a pantheist. They would not look at his writings (it took thirteen years to dispose of 500 copies of *Nature*). In the sight of many people Harvard was long stigmatized for having countenanced Emerson's sentiments. Yet from pulpits of all denominations one now hears the thoughts of this Divinity School Address repeated; and a young reader to-day is apt to wonder why it created a stir.

Just as Carlyle had expressed in *Sartor* the ideals which he was to emphasize and apply throughout his career, so Emerson had expressed his great messages in *Nature* and in the two great addresses. From lecture platform and lyceum desk throughout the United States and once in England (in the series published as *Representative Men*) he kept reiterating them in various forms, gradually attracting listeners, slowly spreading his ideas. His two series of *Essays* (1841, 1844), his *Poems* (1846), and other series of essays preserved his thoughts in print. By 1860 his tangible audience had increased enough to buy up an entire edition of *The Conduct of Life* in forty-eight hours.

In 1866, Emerson received an LL.D. from Harvard. In 1875 his last important production appeared, *Letters and Social Aims*. As he had felt his physical and intellectual vigor declining he had resignedly given up active work. On April 27, 1882, he died at Concord with his eyes resting fondly on a portrait of Carlyle which hung in his room. On a shaded knoll in what is known as Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, a huge rough red granite boulder marks his grave.

When Professor Josiah Royce, a few years ago, wished to indicate the greatness of the late William James, he declared that James was the third great American thinker, the first in time being Jonathan Edwards, and the second Emerson. It was high praise for James, high also for Edwards; the preeminence of Emerson among American authors, as a thinker and as an essayist, is unquestioned.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811-1863)

Chronology

1811 Born, July 18, at Calcutta.
1816 Father died. 1817, to England with mother.
1822-1828 At Charterhouse School.
1829-1830 At Trinity College, Cambridge. Travel. Art studies and ambitions. Legal studies. Journalism.
1836 Married a Miss Shawe. Illness—insanity of wife. Articles and reviews for the *Times*. Tours, sketches.
1841 *Punch* founded; Thackeray a contributor until 1851 —*Snob Papers*, etc., 380 sketches in all.
1847-1848 *Vanity Fair* published serially. 1848, *Pendennis*. 1851, *English Humorists*. 1855, *Newcomes, Four Georges*. 1857, *Virginians*. Quarrel with Dickens.
1860-1862 Editor of *Cornhill Magazine*. *Roundabout Papers, Adventures of Philip, Denis Duval*.
1863 Died, December 24.

The Philosophy of Good-Night Literature: what a fascinating subject for study that would be! First an analysis of that state of mind most conducive to sound and refreshing slumber—a state which, like the ensuing slumber itself, is pretty much the same for all the sons and all the daughters of Adam and Eve. Second, a discriminating compilation of those portions of literature which, experience shows, produce the desirable ante-somnolent state of mind. One can here merely suggest this plan of treatment and adduce a few facts for the compilation. Thackeray declares that Montaigne and Howell's *Letters* were his bedside books. A certain able physician states that he keeps

at his bedside Holmes's *Breakfast Table Series.* Robert Louis Stevenson, as stated above, kept Hazlitt. It is surely pertinent to add that the bookshelf beside the bed in any prospective mansion may well accommodate all of what are referred to as the twenty-six volumes written by Thackeray himself. "A dip into the volume at random," to quote from one of his volumes now, "and so on for a page or two; and now and then a smile [almost indispensable to this ante-somnolent condition]; and presently a gape; and then the book drops out of your hand; and so *bon soir,* and pleasant dreams to you."

Some may be surprised to read that Thackeray should be considered as a Good-Night author; they think of him as a novelist in particular and as a cynic in general. As a novelist he writes too much and too sequaciously for a good-nighter; and as a cynic he causes snarls and sniffs, not smiles and easy gapes: so they may think.

Would that Thackeray might draw a picture of such a person! Fancy the *Punch* cartoon he would make: Ten *heavy* volumes on table; Reader in dressing-gown and nightcap, glum, frowning, upright; great misshapen serpent of a plot, bestridden by scandalous little devils or glooms, winding out of books and menacing Sleep as he stands at door; *under* table, or on shelf behind Reader's back, *sixteen* other volumes, dusty but jovially beckoning, with joys, fancies, oddities, bulging out between pages and stitching, like animals out of a Noah's Ark or that bewildering, unsuppered lot of children out of the Old Woman's Home

in a Shoe. And a strange thing about the picture would be that after one had seen the jovial volumes on the shelf, he would see other perky little joys peeking out of those ten heavy novel volumes on the table, and even obscuring the devils as they scampered over the folds of the serpent-plot.

For what about this cynic nickname? Bear in mind the root meaning—Greek, *kunikos;* Latin, *canis;* English—dog. And to get momentarily the sensation and mental attitude of a cynic, just lift your upper lip so as to expose the tips of your canine teeth. There! you cannot hold it long: neither could Thackeray! If one's impression from his novels has induced the belief that he could long act the cynic, a hasty study of his life and other works will doubtless be enough to eradicate or to modify that impression.

There is a contrasting impression that Thackeray makes, as extreme, perhaps, as this of cynicism, but nevertheless a good and necessary foil to it. Charlotte Bronté, in a dedication prefixed to the second edition of *Jane Eyre,* wrote as follows:

"There is a man in our own days whose words are not framed to tickle delicate ears: who, to my thinking, comes before the great ones of society much as the son of Imlah came before the throned Kings of Judah and Israel; and who speaks truth as deep, with a power as prophet-like and as vital—a mien as dauntless and as daring. . . . I think if some of those amongst whom he hurls the Greek fire of his sarcasm, and over whom he flashes the levin-brand of his denunciation, were to take his warnings in time—they or their seed might yet escape a fatal Ramoth-Gilead.

"Why have I alluded to this man? I have alluded to him, reader, because I think I see in him an intellect profounder and more unique than his contemporaries have yet recognized; because I regard him as the first social regenerator of the day—as the very master of that working corps who would restore to rectitude the warped system of things."

These words refer not to Carlyle, but to the author of various and sundry sketches, satires, burlesques, essays and criticisms; to the man who had recently published his first novel, entitled *Vanity Fair.*

Now, of course, Thackeray was not merely a cynic nor a buffoon, nor primarily a prophet and social regenerator. Yet he surely resembles Carlyle more closely than he does Dean Swift or—Bill Nye. And more and more he impresses one as being a mixture of all that was best in Carlyle on the one hand, and in Charles Lamb on the other—with, of course, other elements, which, to parody Lowell's description of Irving, were

Neither Scottish nor Cockney, just Thackeray.

On this point let us hear first the sequel of the *Jane Eyre* dedication, and then see what Thackeray really tried to do. When Charlotte Brontë wrote the dedication quoted above, she was young, enthusiastic, serious-minded, and acquainted with Thackeray only through his works. There is an anecdote, of doubtful authenticity but surely true in spirit, concerning the first meeting of the two at a formal dinner. The account runs as follows:

"The tiny creature had idealized Thackeray, personally unknown to her, with a passion of idealization. 'Behold, a lion cometh out of the North!' she quoted under her breath, as Thackeray entered the drawing-room. Some one repeated it to him. 'Oh, Lord!' said Thackeray, 'and I'm nothing but a poor devil of an Englishman, ravenous for my dinner!' At dinner Miss Brontë was placed opposite Thackeray by her own request. 'And I had,' said he, 'the miserable humiliation of seeing her ideal of him disappearing down my own throat, as everything went into my mouth and nothing came out of it; until at last, as I took my fifth potato, she leaned across, with clasped hands and tears in her eyes, and breathed imploringly, "Oh, Mr. Thackeray! Don't!"'"

Now, notwithstanding the fact that Thackeray's great body (he was six feet three) doubtless required abundance of food, one may readily believe that he didn't want more than *three* potatoes at that dinner.—He took the most effective way of checking Miss Brontë's sentimental attitude. Lamb supplanted similar stilted sentimentalism by hearty and wholesome laughter when he said: "This is my sister Mary. She is a very good woman, but she d-d-drinks!"

What was Thackeray really trying to do in his books? Unquestionably he was trying, for one thing, to earn a living—as Carlyle sarcastically phrased it, he was "writing for his life." But in doing that he was as consistent in method and in purpose, from his first articles to his latest, as indomitable Carlyle himself.

In Thackeray's day people were worshiping Scott for his representation of past times as superbly good,

noble, and romantic; Dickens for representing lower and middle classes as ineffably tender, sweet, and lovely; Bulwer-Lytton for depicting a life which never existed in terms that human beings could never consistently use; Disraeli and others for idly lolling in sentiment; and still others for making heroes of criminals and outcasts. Thackeray's keen sense of humor, his common sense, were offended. Why deceive ourselves? said he. Why not understand that human beings are not simple, not linear or plane, but solid, complex, mixtures of admirable and regrettable? Why not face the truth?

We have several frank statements of all this; here are two, each having to do with *Vanity Fair:*

"The author of this work has lately been described by the London *Times* newspaper as a writer of considerable parts, but a dreary misanthrope, who sees no good anywhere, who sees the sky above him green, I think, instead of blue, and only miserable sinners around him. So we are, as is every writer and reader I ever heard of, so was every being who ever trod this earth, save One. I cannot help telling the truth as I view it, and describing what I see. To describe it otherwise than it seems to me would be falsehood in that calling in which it has pleased Heaven to place me; treason to that conscience which says that men are weak; that truth must be told; that faults must be owned; that pardon must be prayed for; and that love reigns supreme over all."

"My kind reader will please to remember that this history has *Vanity Fair* for a title, and that *Vanity Fair* is a very vain, wicked, foolish place, full of all sorts of humbugs and falseness and pretensions.

"People there are living and flourishing in the world . . . with no reverence except for prosperity, and no eye for anything beyond success—faithless, hopeless, charityless. Let us have at them, dear friends, with might and main."

It is worth while to observe closely two vivid examples of the stripped, truthful Thackeray method of presentation, and these, as most striking in little, from the realm of pathos. Recall those long accounts in Dickens of the death of Paul Dombey and that of Sidney Carton, how carefully and elaborately the stage is set, how every detail is utilized to its fullest extent as a means of inducing heart-throbs and tears. Listen by contrast to these by Thackeray. One narrates what happened just after Samuel Titmarsh had secured new lodgings in Paris for his wife and their newborn child:

"It was not, however, destined that she and her child should inhabit that little garret. We were to leave our lodgings on Monday morning; but on Saturday evening the child was seized with convulsions, and all day Sunday the mother watched and prayed for it; but it pleased God to take the innocent infant from us, and on Sunday, at midnight, it lay a corpse in its mother's bosom. Amen. We have other children, happy and well, now round about us, and from the father's heart the memory of this little thing has almost faded; but I do believe that every day of her life the mother thinks of the firstborn that was with her for so short a while: many and many a time has she taken her daughters to the grave, in Saint Bride's, where he lies buried; and she wears still at her neck a little, little lock of gold hair, which she took from the head of the infant as he lay smiling in his coffin. It has happened to me to forget the child's birthday, but to her never; and often in the midst of common talk

comes something that shows she is thinking of the child still."

The other passage succeeds a description of the city of Brussels during the battle of Waterloo some miles outside of the city; the chapter, a critical one in the story of *Vanity Fair,* ends thus:

"No more firing was heard at Brussels—the pursuit rolled miles away. Darkness came down on the field and city: and Amelia was praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart."

The briskness of thought, the good-nature and the good sense of Thackeray, faintly indicated by these anecdotes and passages, all tend to produce the ante-somnolent state of mind,—a healthy state of mind, one good for rising and for living by as well!

Let us see who Thackeray was and what were his memorable experiences. Like so many other English writers, he drifted into literature. Born in Calcutta, the only son of a high-grade civil service employee, educated at the Charterhouse, the school of Addison and Steele, he spent a few months at Trinity College, Cambridge. His patrimony was large and his interests were varied. He traveled; attempted law, only to find it too "cold-blooded"; studied and practised drawing—he was rejected by Dickens as an illustrator for *Pickwick Papers.* He lost large sums of money in newspaper and other legitimate ventures, also some money in gambling, and was at length compelled to work for his bread.

He made the most of his opportunities in journalism; and, although much that he wrote consisted of purely ephemeral sketches and burlesques, he had serious articles also on the annual art exhibitions, and his review of Carlyle's *French Revolution* was notably discriminating and appreciative. His sketches and tales suggested Fielding and Goldsmith, but for some reason they did not find favor with the public. Even in *Punch,* which was established by several of his friends in 1841, his early contributions (there were 380 in all before he severed the connection in 1851) secured him no very wide attention. At last, in 1847-1848, with a novel distinct in tone from others which were being published, with *Vanity Fair,* he won recognition. Mrs. Carlyle promptly wrote to Carlyle that Thackeray "beats Dickens out of the world."

His other great novels followed: *Pendennis* (1848), *Henry Esmond* (1852), *The Newcomes* (1855), and *The Virginians* (1857). In 1852 he came to America in company with James Russell Lowell to deliver his lectures on *The English Humorists.* In 1855 he made another lecture tour in America with *The Four Georges.* Each tour was undertaken largely to provide for the support of his daughters.

After the appearance of *Vanity Fair,* the relations between Dickens enthusiasts and Thackeray enthusiasts had often become bitter. The two authors, on the contrary, who knew each other well, had gone on doing their work, and each had maintained a healthy friendship for the other. At length, a difference of opinion over a mutual friend, aggravated by some

indiscreet expressions from each man, created a wide and most unfortunate breach between them. Just a few days before Thackeray's death, however, it is pleasant to record, they met on the steps of a building in London, passed coldly, then turned at the same moment and spontaneously shook hands. Neither writer, it is pleasant to record further, has received more glowing tributes than those recorded by the other.

But little additional information about Thackeray is necessary. His most important productions as an essayist appeared late in his life in the *Cornhill Magazine,* of which he was the first editor. Tennyson, Trollope, and Ruskin were among the contributors. And the series prepared by Thackeray under the title of *Roundabout Papers* reflect his most charming and most wholesome moods.

His last novels, *Lovel the Widower, The Adventures of Philip,* and *Denis Duval,* also appeared in *Cornhill.* The third of these was left incomplete at Thackeray's death on December 24, 1863. People whose sentimentalism Thackeray himself would doubtless have approved, find significance in the last words which Thackeray penned: "And his heart throbbed with an exquisite bliss."

Thackeray's daughter tells us that *Roundabout Papers* constitute a virtual diary of his last, that is, of his ripest, his happiest years. There the great-hearted man shows clearly that his early buffoonery and near-cynicism were at best but a mask. These essays, best

of all his writings, perhaps, induce a good-night spirit. And more and more a reader of these and others of his essays and sketches becomes conscious that Thackeray, like Carlyle, yet after his own peculiar fashion, was engaged in the great conflict for truth, and for genuineness.

JOHN RUSKIN (1819-1900)

Chronology

1819 Born, February 18, in London. Juvenilia.
1833 Tour of Europe. Tutors. Other tours.
1836-1843 At Christ Church (College), Oxford. Prizes. Illness. Geological studies and writings. Defense of Turner. 1840, introduced to Turner.
1843 First volume of *Modern Painters;* others—1846, 1856, 1856, 1860. Love affairs: wrote *King of the Golden River* (1841) for a Miss Gray, whom he married in 1848; marriage annulled in 1854.
1849 *Seven Lamps of Architecture.* 1851-1853, *Stones of Venice.* Textbooks. 1857, *Political Economy of Art.* 1859, *The Two Paths.*
1860 *Unto This Last* in *Cornhill.* Lectures: 1865, *Sesame and Lilies; Crown of Wild Olive; Ethics of the Dust.* 1867, *Time and Tide.*
1871 Purchased Brantwood on Coniston Lake. Social experiments.
1878-1884 Slade Professor of Fine Arts, Oxford. Whistler episode. Weakness. Friends.
1900 Died, January 20. Buried at Coniston.

In these studies we have necessarily maintained pretty consistently the attitude of reverence. Our reverence would probably be more healthy and wholesouled, in many cases, if we were aware of the other

estimates of our divinities which have at times been freely proclaimed. Not all Americans of about 1870, for example, in arranging each his little private gallery of extraordinary men—not all of these would, like Lowell, have placed Emerson in the Hall of Fame; some would have shoved him into the adjoining crypt of infamy and labeled him fool. And many Englishmen of about the same time, if challenged to produce Emerson's counterpart in folly, would have thrust forward two candidates: one the cranky, crusty Carlyle; the other the ribald, wrangling Ruskin. We shall appreciate Ruskin ultimately all the more if we look at him for a moment from this angle.

To begin with, this fellow Ruskin was always saying things, always saying them forcibly, and always neglecting to determine whether or not they would be pleasant to hear. Such a man is bound to create awkward situations. Further, instead of exercising his volubility in the field of art, where it would have been diverting and harmless, this Ruskin kept poking into all sorts of things. In his ever-forcible way he told peasants that their moral defects were openly displayed by their cottage walls and chimneys; small towns, that their monumented squares were invisible behind the heaps of waste paper and broken bottles in their back alleys; "restorers" of ancient architecture, that they were vandals more culpable than Henry VIII or the Roundheads; great and prosperous merchants, that they were really mere gamblers; loyal soldiers, that they existed chiefly to destroy surplus population; the government, that it failed utterly to appre-

ciate its true function; political economists, that their talk of "supply and demand," "wealth," labor, capital, and so on, was but purposeless pother. He also gave money broadcast to young authors and artists—few of whom came to anything. And he tried experiments in manufacturing, in farming, and in education—most of which were ludicrous and speedy failures. Not a knave, perhaps, this fellow Ruskin; but surely a fool!

What of the sequel? A circle of young artists, the Pre-Raphaelites, acting upon Ruskin's theory of art, became the most noted of nineteenth century artists. Turner, the English painter whom Ruskin may be said to have discovered, occupies more space in British galleries to-day than perhaps ten other painters put together. Long since, architects and others ceased attempting to "restore" ancient architecture; steadily these architects have been approximating Ruskin's dominant conceptions of what is honest, appropriate, and truly beautiful in architecture. Of his social tenets, that concerning war as promoted chiefly by capitalists who either lend money to combatants or manufacture their implements for profit, has often of late received striking confirmation. Ruskin's efforts to revive the joy of work, moreover, are represented to-day in our Arts and Crafts movement and in the extension of Vocational Training. The old-age pensions which he favored have been granted by most nations in Europe, and are likely soon to be resorted to in America. Social settlements, social-service activities of all sorts, civic and village improvement

societies, the custom of preserving great and striking beauties of nature, all, consciously or unconsciously, are carrying out ideas advanced by Ruskin. And though back alleys are, to be sure, still thick with paper and bottles; though many cities are still built (as he said) "for labor and not for life"; though we still dress our productive laborers in mean clothes and our soldiers in bright ones (instead of in the black which alone, he said, is appropriate to executioners); though capital and labor are still at odds, and our notion of wealth still comprehends coin rather than happiness,—the sequel is not completed.

What are the important elements which composed this powerful, far-seeing man? Take a nature more sensitive than Leigh Hunt's, a mind more comprehensive and more precocious than Macaulay's, a hand almost as skilful as Turner's own, an altruism which has perhaps been a model for our greatest philanthropists, an insight and a vigor as great as Carlyle's, and a facility of expression greater than Stevenson's. Endow this nature with a million and more of money, and with an education practically complete in natural science and in the fine arts. Then set the nature thus endowed in the midst of a nation gripping the world through its commerce and its manufactures, a nation which gloried in a London and a Manchester which few could see for smoke and soot, a nation which bayoneted China into furnishing a market for British opium. The title of fool was as certain to come to him as clouds to the summit of

his favorite Mt. Coniston. One who reads him widely, moreover, comes to feel that the title of fool is certain to be succeeded by that of seer and saint.

Until about his thirty-fifth year, Ruskin was interested primarily in art. He had been born and bred to love pictures and all beautiful objects. At twenty-three he had written upon art, the first volume of *Modern Painters.* But as he went up and down enjoying the beauties of landscapes and the works of the great masters, he grew troubled over the fact that other men seemed not to enjoy these things, and that no paintings nor buildings nor ornaments at all comparable in beauty to works of past great masters were being produced. His curious, analytic mind set to work to determine the cause. At length he concluded that the fault lay in men's ideals. He endeavored at first to preach along with his doctrine of beauty a gospel above that of profits and mechanical efficiency. Finally, he gave up attempting to teach both, and selected for emphasis during the rest of his life the doctrines of true happiness and true progress which had crystallized in his mind. *Unto This Last* marks the beginning of Ruskin's sociological period.

No author whom we consider has made more frequent nor more severe attacks upon the rich, more moving representations of the poor. Yet Ruskin, more truly even than Thackeray, was born with a golden spoon in his mouth. You will scarcely find in Dickens more pitiful contrasts between the sordid and the beautiful, the starving and the surfeited; yet while

Dickens suffered the sharpest pangs of poverty and wrote fiction, Ruskin, who wrote fact, never felt the pinch of poverty.

Ruskin's father was a wealthy merchant. John, his only son, was born in London, February 18, 1819. His boyish experiences included much reading of the Bible with his mother, and extensive memorizing of passages from it; careful and long-continued examination of natural objects, such as flowers or an ant-colony in his father's garden; and glorious long posting (driving) tours over England with his mother and father, for the double purpose of taking orders for wine and of seeing famous valleys and mountains and, in private houses and public museums, great pictures. He never was allowed to look at what his father, himself a discriminating critic, considered a bad picture. And on Sundays, from no narrow Puritan spirit but as a fit form of self-denial, it was the custom in the family home to turn favorite pictures face to the wall.

At four years of age he could read and write; at seven he composed numerous stories, and the next year wrote endless verses. Tutors in the classics and in drawing, and a course interrupted by illness at Oxford, did something for his education. Since natural science and the fine arts were not then subjects of University study, his travels over England and the Continent, his reading, and his passionate contemplation of art, of architecture, of plants, and of mineral and geological phenomena did much more for his real education.

The scientific significance and the inherent beauty of things were one to him. He had no patience with the tendency to regard them as distinct. "Oxford taught me as much Greek and Latin as she could," he afterwards said; "and, though I think that she might also have told me that fritillaries grew in Iffley meadow, it was better that she left me to find them for myself than that she should have told me, as nowadays she would, that the painting on them was only to amuse the midges."

Those juvenile compositions of Ruskin's were of course insignificant. Even before he entered Oxford, however, he began serious writing. He soon abandoned poetry as a form in which "he could express nothing rightly that he had to say." And his prose compositions soon came to deal chiefly with art. The nom de plume which he adopted is significant—Kata Phusin (according to nature); it indicates the touchstone which he persistently and intelligently applied to all art objects. Turner (J. M. W., Esq.), then still living, impressed him more and more as one who painted "according to nature." In 1843, Ruskin published a volume maintaining the superiority of moderns in landscape painting; the title he had selected indicated whom the volume treated as chief of the moderns—it was *Turner and the Ancients;* but the publishers persuaded him to call it *Modern Painters.* Continuations of this work, making it a comprehensive treatise on art, appeared in successive volumes to the number of five, the last in 1860. It abounds in those flights of impassioned prose in which Ruskin sur-

passes De Quincey; even if his sociological and artistic theories are forgotten, these passages in *Modern Painters* and elsewhere are likely to survive.

The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849), *Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds* (1851), *Stones of Venice* (1853), and *The Political Economy of Art* (1857) further expressed his theories. It was during this period that the Pre-Raphaelites developed, Ruskin encouraging them. It was also during this period that Ruskin's difficulties as an art-collector became painful; the confidence in his judgment was so great that any picture which he wished to purchase was at once bid up very high, and a picture he did not care for could hardly be sold at all. Needless to say, all the painters feared him, and more hated him than loved him.

He published technical treatises on *Drawing,* and actually taught classes at a workingmen's college. He must have been a discouraging teacher. A pupil tells of watching him at work copying a picture in a gallery: Ruskin would examine some apparently insignificant detail of the picture, such as a thread in a dress, for *five minutes,* and would then swiftly draw it on his own canvas. Naturally his paintings, both copies and originals, are not in all numerous, and most of them are only partially completed; but his best work may readily be mistaken for Turner's.

Ruskin's wife, to whom he had proposed at the suggestion of his parents, and whom he married in 1848, is memorable for us chiefly as the inspiration of *The King of the Golden River.* Ruskin wrote it for

her in two sittings in 1841. In 1854, their marriage was annulled, and she later became the wife of the painter Millais.

Soon after this came that complete transformation in Ruskin's life already referred to. He had been growing ever more sensitive to the hammer-blows struck by Carlyle in *Sartor,* in *Heroes,* in *Chartism,* in *Past and Present.* In all his attempts to secure practical application of his art teachings, he had been met by the same impossible intellectual and industrial conditions. What Carlyle called a "divine rage against falsity" at length isolated Ruskin completely. For a time, he says ironically, he felt such a peace as might one "buried . . . in a tuft of grass on a battlefield wet with blood." Finally he acted upon the thought which for ten years had been taking deep root in his mind, the thought quoted at the beginning of our treatment of Carlyle: "It is no time for the idleness of metaphysics or the entertainment of the arts." And in 1860 his newest convictions began to appear in the new *Cornhill Magazine,* of which his friend, Thackeray, was the kind-hearted editor. The first three papers, startling and excoriating to contemporaries, raised such a hubbub of disapproval that Thackeray had to tell Ruskin that he could publish but one more. The four are known as *Unto This Last.* A sequel, now known as *Munera Pulveris,* was started in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1862; it too had to be discontinued, this time at the command of the curator of subscriptions, the publisher.

Ruskin, the indefatigable, published both in book

form, duly prefaced and annotated. And in lectures up and down the country, in *The Two Paths* (1859), *Sesame and Lilies* (1865), *A Crown of Wild Olive* (1866), *Ethics of the Dust* (1866), *Time and Tide* (1867), and *Fors Clavigera* (1871), he proclaimed and reiterated his principles.

The excellence of a product, said Ruskin, is to be judged less by the product itself than by its influence on the life of its producers; wealth, he maintained, is significant only as it develops human life; and, further, not competition but helpfulness, cooperation, contains the secret of life.

Of the practical applications of these principles which he proposed may be mentioned a system of national education, the thorough organization of labor, the establishment of government training schools, the provision of old-age pensions, and the maintenance of decent homes for the working-classes. These were the things once howled out of the magazines. It is well known how we regard each to-day, and what credit we should assign to Ruskin in consequence. Ruskin also spent great sums of money in promoting agricultural, industrial, and artistic experiments. His patrimony of at least a million dollars was entirely dispersed by him in these ways. The artist, the social theorist, thus became the practical social reformer.

In 1878 he was made (the first) Slade Professor of Fine Arts at Oxford. The same year he made some contemptuous reference to Whistler. That eccentric painter brought action for libel, and was at length awarded damages of one farthing. Ruskin's costs,

necessarily very great, were, like Newman's under similar circumstances, defrayed by popular subscription. It appears that the party willing to count Ruskin as a seer was a very considerable one.

But the end of Ruskin's active, stormy life was approaching. Broken in health, bent by the still clamorous calumny of those who opposed him, Ruskin worked on at the duties of his professorship, lecturing, revising his art teaching, even preparing guidebooks to foreign cities of prime importance in art. At length, however, in 1884, when the authorities denied his drawing school some needed funds but appropriated funds for a laboratory where vivisection was to be practised, Ruskin resigned.

He withdrew to his estate, Brantwood, on the shore of Lake Coniston, and the years passed often painfully but uneventfully. Some autobiographical writing which he undertook, *Praeterita Dilecta,* was never completed. Even young people may remember the newspaper headlines announcing his death on January 20, 1900, and his burial in the village cemetery of Coniston, the offer of a grave in Westminster having been declined.

It is almost a generation since the last of his essays was published, since the last of what Carlyle called his "fierce lightning bolts" was hurled. The flashes and the detonations of the successive bolts still reflect and reverberate. Their mission seems surely to have been electrifying, not annihilating, as so many men then supposed. Carlyle's *practical* teaching was

depressing, destructive; Emerson's was uplifting, but for the most part not immediately practicable; this man's was constructive, hopeful, power-engendering. It is hard to say how much of Economics and Sociology as they are now studied and being put into practise has been contributed by Ruskin, precisely how much of modern conceptions of art and architecture we owe to him. Certainly, as students of the essay and as participants in active life, we cannot easily know too much of John Ruskin.

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822-1888)

Chronology

1822 Born, December 24, at Laleham; son of Dr. Thomas Arnold, later (1828 ff.) headmaster of Rugby.
1837-1841 Student at Rugby. Prizes.
1841-1845 Student at Balliol College, Oxford. Prizes. Fellow at Oriel, 1845.
1847 Private secretary to Marquis of Lansdowne, administrator of public instruction. Arnold later (1851) made inspector of schools.
1849 *The Strayed Reveler and Other Poems*—by Arnold, Clough, and others.
1852 *Empedocles on Ætna.* 1853, *Poems.* 1855, *Poems.*
1857-1867 Professor of Poetry at Oxford.
1861-1862 *On Translating Homer*—lectures. 1867, *On the Study of Celtic Literature.* 1865, *Essays in Criticism.*
1869 *Culture and Anarchy.* 1875, *Literature and Dogma.*
1883 Pensioned by Gladstone. Lecture tour in America.
1888 Sudden death at Liverpool, April 15.

Matthew Arnold was the eldest son of the famous Dr. Thomas Arnold, long the headmaster of the great

English school at Rugby. Matthew Arnold received his school education at Rugby, where he was a brilliant scholar. At Balliol College, Oxford, he likewise made a brilliant record. Soon after his graduation he became an inspector of schools, and throughout his life he expended a great part of his energy and his intellect on the humdrum tasks which this office imposed upon him.

The late evenings he spent upon the more congenial task of writing, and from the time when his first poems appeared in 1849 until his *Discourses in America* were published in 1885, he produced a vast amount of carefully wrought, exquisite verse, and of thoughtful, memorable criticism.

His skill as a poet secured him in middle age the office of Professor of Poetry at Oxford. Some of his lectures in this capacity, notably those *On Translating Homer* and *On the Study of Celtic Literature,* are among the most enduring critical works in the English language. In 1883 England recognized his attainments by giving him a pension. He visited America twice, in 1883 and again in 1886. Problems of literature, of politics, and of religion engaged his most earnest and enthusiastic efforts. His death from heart disease came suddenly at Liverpool in April, 1888. Such is the simple story of his outward life.

If Matthew Arnold came early in a study of nineteenth century essayists, one would almost despair of being able to interest inexperienced readers in him. He had an unromantic life—inspector of schools, one-

time Professor at Oxford, poet, lecturer, controversialist, essayist. His feats as a swimmer constitute the only incident in his biography which may certainly be calculated to make people in general really look alive. And for students or readers who still require of an author that he slap them on the back or nudge them in the ribs or grip them by the arm or by trap or lasso seize and hold them—for such persons Matthew Arnold will be as one who passes by on the other side. There is little cut and thrust, little drawing of the long bow of thought, little of enticing tintinnabulation with him. He is less startling than Carlyle, less musical and less passionate than Ruskin, more intelligible—and duller—than Emerson.

Yet Matthew Arnold rightly makes a fourth with the three superb essayists and thinkers of the century. And those who know and have proved the delights of thinking as they read, the delights of perceiving wholeness and fitness in the structure and expression of an essay, and the delights of feeling good sense, good temper, and wisdom reflected from pages of print, will listen eagerly when Arnold sits before them talking.

Matthew Arnold was a professional critic. He adopted the rôle as deliberately and as heroically as Ruskin adopted that of social reformer, as Carlyle and Emerson adopted that of preacher in the vast church of letters. Arnold's purpose in so doing was as broad and as high as that of any of these other men. He was a critic of poetry, of books. But he

was more than that. He was a critic of current political thought, of current religious and theological thought, of the temper and spirit and ideals of nineteenth century Englishmen—including Americans. We shall do well to examine, first, a sample of his criticism; second, his purpose as a critic; and, third, some of the important principles which in his work as a critic he strove to inculcate.

As a sample of his criticism let us take his analysis of Emerson. It is from a lecture delivered in Boston. He has related how to him as a student at Oxford the voice of Newman preaching there in St. Mary's Church, the voice of Carlyle still fresh and clarion-like, the voice of Goethe speaking through Carlyle—all three came powerful, penetrating, inspiring. Arnold continues:

"And besides those voices, there came to us in that old Oxford time a voice also from this side of the Atlantic,—a clear and pure voice, which for my ear, at any rate, brought a strain as new, and moving, and unforgettable, as the strain of Newman, or Carlyle, or Goethe. Mr. Lowell has well described the apparition of Emerson to your young generation here in that distant time of which I am speaking, and of his workings upon them. He was your Newman, your man of soul and genius, visible to you in the flesh, speaking to your bodily ears, a present object for your heart and imagination. That is surely the most potent of all influences! nothing can come up to it. To us at Oxford Emerson was but a voice speaking from three thousand miles away. But so well he spoke, that from that time forth Boston Bay and Concord were names invested to my ear with a sentiment akin to that which invests for me the names of Oxford and of Weimar;

and snatches of Emerson's strain fixed themselves in my mind as imperishably as any of the eloquent words which I have been just now quoting. 'Then dies the man in you; then once more perish the buds of art, poetry, and science, as they have died already in a thousand thousand men . . . and not pinched in a corner, not cowards, fleeing before a revolution, but redeemers and benefactors, pious aspirants to be noble clay plastic under the Almighty effort, let us advance and advance on chaos and the dark.' These lofty sentences of Emerson, and a hundred others of like strain, I never have lost out of my memory; I never *can* lose them."

Arnold then points out that Emerson will not be known to remote posterity as a poet, nor as a great man of letters at all, nor even as a philosopher. Continuing, he says:

"And now I think I have cleared the ground. I have given up to envious Time as much of Emerson as Time can fairly expect ever to obtain. We have not in Emerson a great poet, a great writer, a great philosophy maker. His relation to us is not that of one of those personages; yet it is a relation of, I think, even superior importance. His relation to us is more like that of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Marcus Aurelius is not a great writer, a great philosophy maker; he is the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit. Emerson is the same. He is the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit. All the points in thinking which are necessary for this purpose he takes; but he does not combine them into a system, or present them as a regular philosophy. Combined in a system by a man with the requisite talent for this kind of thing, they would be less useful than as Emerson gives them to us; and the man with the talent so to systematize them would be less impressive than Emerson."

He goes on to point out that Emerson's teaching is characterized by hope, by optimism, and that these qualities justify one in considering Emerson greater even than Carlyle. He concludes:

"You cannot prize him too much, nor heed him too diligently. He has lessons for both the branches of our race. I figure him to my mind as physical upon earth still, as still standing here by Boston Bay, or at his own Concord, in his habit as he lived, but of heightened stature and shining feature, with one hand stretched out toward the East, to our laden and laboring England; the other towards the ever-growing West, to his own dearly-loved America,—'great, intelligent, sensual, avaricious America.' To us he shows for guidance his lucid freedom, his cheerfulness and hope; to you his dignity, delicacy, serenity, elevation."

Perhaps Arnold's most noted literary criticism is contained in three lectures delivered at Oxford *On Translating Homer.* In these lectures, in cogent, concrete, and convincing English, he emphasizes points which at once exalt the poetry and art of Homer, and ennoble the task of a careful translator of Homer. This essay and other essays must be read to be appreciated for the criticism which they include.

In all this criticism—of Emerson, of translators, of Homer, of Marcus Aurelius, and of all the other topics which he treats—Arnold was fulfilling a purpose. What was the conception of criticism which this man had and which made him even forsake the career of a poet for that of a critic? We get a clear answer in his essay on *The Function of Criticism.* One may dwell upon this because to most people criticism—of

themes, of books, the negative or unprogressive attitude toward a new movement—seems pedantic, dilatory, unprofitable. Here are some brief statements of Arnold's conception of criticism:

"Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas. Its business is to do this with inflexible honesty, with due ability; . . . its business is to keep man from a self-satisfaction which is retarding and vulgarizing, to lead him towards perfection by making his mind dwell upon what is excellent in itself, and the absolute beauty and fitness of things.

"Judging is often spoken of as the critic's one business, and so in some sense it is; but the judgment which almost insensibly forms itself in a fair and clear mind, along with fresh knowledge, is the valuable one; and thus knowledge and ever fresh knowledge, must be the critic's great concern for himself; and it is by communicating fresh knowledge, and letting his own judgment pass along with it—but insensibly, and in the second place, not the first, as a sort of companion and clue, not as an abstract law-giver—that he will generally do most good to his readers."

Arnold also points out that it is the duty of criticism to resist the establishment of institutions with pretentious but misguided, ill-balanced purposes—"the grand name without the grand thing," "to be perpetually dissatisfied with these works, while they perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal." The most piercing remark in the essay, moreover, is this: "let us in the meanwhile rather endeavor that in twenty years' time it may, in English literature, be an objection to a proposition that it is absurd. That,"

he continues, with a sarcasm pardonable, it would seem, to this day, "that will be a change so vast that the imagination almost fails to grasp it."

One other passage in this essay strikingly illustrates the need and the function of criticism as Arnold conceived them when he wrote. You will note something of both Carlyle and Ruskin in the thought:

"Mr. Adderley says to the Warwickshire farmers: 'Talk of the improvement of breed! Why, the race we ourselves represent, the men and women, the old Anglo-Saxon race, are the best breed in the whole world. . . . The absence of a too enervating climate, too unclouded skies, and a too luxurious nature, has produced so vigorous a race of people, and has rendered us so superior to all the world.'

"Mr. Roebuck says to the Sheffield cutlers: 'I look around me and ask what is the state of England? Is not property safe? Is not every man able to say what he likes? Can you not walk from one end of England to the other in perfect security? I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing. I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last.'

"Now obviously there is a peril for poor human nature in words and thoughts of such exuberant self-satisfaction, until we find ourselves safe in the streets of the Celestial City. . . . But let criticism . . . in the most candid spirit . . . confront with our dithyramb this paragraph on which I stumbled in a newspaper immediately after reading Mr. Roebuck: 'A shocking child murder has just been committed at Nottingham. A girl named Wragg left the workhouse on Saturday morning with her young illegitimate child. The child was soon afterwards found dead on Mapperly Hills, having been strangled. Wragg is in custody.'

"Nothing but that; but, in juxtaposition with the absolute eulogies of Mr. Adderley and Mr. Roebuck, how eloquent,

how suggestive are those few lines! 'Our old Anglo-Saxon breed, the best in the whole world!'—how much that is harsh and ill-favored there is in this best! . . . 'our unrivalled happiness;'—what an element of grimness, bareness, and hideousness mixes with it and blurs it; the workhouse, the dismal Mapperly Hills,—how dismal those who have seen them will remember;—the gloom, the smoke, the cold, the strangled illegitimate child! 'I ask you whether the world over or in past history there is anything like it?' It may be so, one is inclined to answer; but at any rate, in that case, the world is very much to be pitied. And the final touch,—short, bleak and inhuman: *Wragg is in custody.* The sex lost in the confusion of our unrivalled happiness; or shall I say, the superfluous Christian name lopped off by the straightforward vigor of our old Anglo-Saxon breed? There is profit for the spirit in such contrasts as this; criticism serves the cause of perfection by establishing them. . . . Mr. Roebuck will have a poor opinion of an adversary who replies to his defiant songs of triumph only by murmuring under his breath, *Wragg is in custody;* but in no other way will these songs of triumph be induced gradually to moderate themselves, to get rid of what in them is excessive and offensive, and to fall into a softer and truer key."

It is not that Arnold disapproved of enthusiasm, of loyalty to country, of reasonable content with one's surroundings. It is that he felt the need of poise, of clearness of vision, of "knowledge and ever fresh knowledge." And insistence upon these things, the furnishing of knowledge, the diffusion of cloud and haze, the establishment of poise, was, he considered, the high function of criticism, the work of the critic.

And now for some of the principal ideas emphasized by the critic Arnold in his attempt to improve

mankind by extending knowledge and by insisting upon reason and balance in all things. Two terms, both familiar to-day, and one, at least, now far from definite in meaning, are frequently on Arnold's lips. They are "Philistine" (or Philistinism) and "Culture." Let us understand each term and the relationship of culture to Philistinism.

It is well known who were the original Philistines: the enemies of the Children of Israel, the opponents of the Lord's chosen people. Goliath, boasting of his strength, flourishing his mighty weapons, and defying the Israelites to advance, is their chief prototype. The word had been applied by German students to persons not members of the University, hence not members of the enlightened class. Carlyle had pitched upon the word as designating bore or dullard or provincial. But it did not really enter the vocabulary of English people until Arnold seized it and dwelt upon it in his essay on *Heine.* He says:

"Philistinism!—we have not the expression in English. Perhaps we have not the word because we have so much of the thing. At Soli, I imagine, they did not talk of solecisms; and here, at the very headquarters of Goliath, nobody talks of Philistinism. The French have adopted the term *épicier* (grocer), to designate the sort of being whom the Germans designate by the term Philistine; but the French term,—besides that it casts a slur upon a respectable class composed of living and susceptible members, while the original Philistines are dead and buried long ago,—is really, I think, in itself much less apt and expressive than the German term. Efforts have been made to obtain in English some term equivalent to *Philister* or *épicier;* Mr. Carlyle has made sev-

eral such efforts: 'respectability with its thousand gigs,' he says;—well, the occupant of every one of these gigs is, Mr. Carlyle means, a Philistine. However, the word *respectable* is far too valuable a word to be thus perverted from its proper meaning; if the English are ever to have a word for the thing we are speaking of,—and so prodigious are the changes which the modern spirit is introducing, that even we English shall perhaps one day come to want such a word, —I think we had much better take the term Philistine itself.

"Philistine must have originally meant in the mind of those who invented the nickname, a strong, dogged, unenlightened opponent of the chosen people, of the children of light. . . . This explains . . . the detestation which Heine had for the English: 'I might settle in England,' he says, in his exile, 'if it were not that I should find there two things, coal-smoke and Englishmen; I cannot abide either.' What he hated in the English was the 'ächtbrittische Beschränktheit,' as he calls it,—the *genuine British narrowness.* In truth the English, profoundly as they have modified the old Middle Age order, great as is the liberty which they have secured for themselves, have in all their changes proceeded, to use a familiar expression, by the rule of thumb; what was intolerably inconvenient to them they have suppressed, and as they have suppressed it, not because it was irrational, but because it was practically inconvenient, they have seldom in suppressing it appealed to reason, but always, if possible, to some precedent, or form, or letter, which served as a convenient instrument for their purpose, and which saved them from the necessity of recurring to general principles. They have thus become, in a certain sense, of all people the most inaccessible to ideas and the most impatient of them; inaccessible to them, because of their want of familiarity with them; and impatient of them because they have got on so well without them, that they despise those who, not having got on as well as themselves, still make a fuss for what they themselves have done so well without. But there has

certainly followed from hence, in this country, somewhat of a general depression of pure intelligence."

The great virtue of the Elizabethan age, the secret of its marvelous progress, says Arnold, was "its accessibility to ideas," its lack of Philistinism; the great defect of the nineteenth century, he says, the explanation of the ultimate failure of Wordsworth, of Shelley, of Scott, to attain each his full measure of greatness, was the prevalence of Philistinism. The smug satisfaction which points with pride to attainments of the present and disregards its failures, which assumes or approximates a self-satisfaction appropriate only in the Celestial City, this, says Arnold, is Philistinism.

And how is Philistinism to be cured? How is Goliath to be silenced and put out of the way? By sling and pebbles, by methodical, well-poised *Culture.* The word has tended to degenerate. Let us see how Arnold used it. His most careful definition of it, his most extended application of culture as a remedy is contained in his series of essays called *Culture and Anarchy.* Here he first explains what culture is not:

"In one of his speeches a short time ago, that fine speaker and famous Liberal, Mr. Bright, took occasion to have a fling at the friends and preachers of culture. 'People who talk about what they call *culture!*' said he contemptuously; 'by which they mean a smattering of the two dead languages of Greek and Latin.' And he went on to remark, in a strain with which modern speakers and writers have made us very familiar, how poor a thing this culture is, how little good it can do to the world, and how absurd it is for its possessors to set much store by it. . . .

"The culture which is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued either out of sheer vanity and ignorance or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title, from other people who have not got it. No serious man would call this *culture,* or attach any value to it, as culture, at all."

Arnold later defines culture as characterized by an effort to *see* and *learn* what reason and the will of God dictate, and the endeavor to make this *prevail.* With greater concreteness he writes:

"The whole scope of the essay is to recommend culture as the great help out of our present difficulties, culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world; and through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits, which we now follow staunchly but mechanically, vainly imagining that there is a virtue in following them staunchly which makes up for the mischief of following them mechanically."

The things which culture of this sort aims to produce and will produce he finds expressed in a phrase of Jonathan Swift's,—"the two noblest of things, sweetness and light." These things, by the steady pursuit of true culture, by a constant striving to learn, by open-mindedness toward all things, and by avoidance of bigotry in literature, in politics, in religion, mankind may procure for itself. Any other aim, the pursuit of any other means, according to Arnold, leads to Anarchy, to despair and death.

Arnold saw at work in modern times a tendency which would nobly transform the world. Listen to his definition of this modern spirit. In it one recognizes the truth of the definition and also the extent to which Arnold's theories encourage such a spirit.

"Modern times find themselves with an immense system of institutions, established facts, accredited dogmas, customs, rules, which have come to them from times not modern. In this system their life has to be carried forward; yet they have a sense that this system is not of their own creation, that it by no means corresponds exactly with the wants of their actual life, that, for them, it is customary, not rational. The awakening of this sense is the awakening of the modern spirit."

Goethe, Carlyle, Emerson, and Ruskin: all were exponents of this modern spirit; of them all none saw his object more clearly nor fought for it more consistently than Arnold.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-1894)

Chronology

1850 Born, November 13, in Edinburgh, descendant of lighthouse engineers. Mother delicate, but with taste for letters. Illness. Play, little schooling; private tutors; lighthouse tours.

1867 Entered Edinburgh University. Idler and truant. Reading and writing.

1871 Received a Society Medal for paper on improvement in lighthouse apparatus. Forsook engineering; studied law.

1876 Tour of Belgium with Sir Walter Simpson.

1878 Month at Monastier and walk through mountains to Florac. Published *An Inland Voyage* and *Travels With a Donkey.*

1876 ff. Essays in *Cornhill.* 1877 ff., stories.
1879 Followed Mrs. Osbourne from France to California.
1880 Married Mrs. Osbourne. Illness. Hard work. To Scotland. *Virginibus Puerisque,* collection of periodical essays. *Treasure Island,* first public success. Stories, novels, plays.
1887 *Memories and Portraits.* Went to Adirondacks, Saranac Lake.
1888-1889 Yachting trip in South Seas. Purchased Vailima, Samoa.
1890 Established household at Vailima. Tusitala. Hard work.
1892 *Across the Plains.* Dictation of *St. Ives. Weir of Hermiston.*
1894 Sudden death, apoplexy, December 4. Burial on Mt. Vaea.

Robert Louis Stevenson: delicate descendant of sturdy, pious, Scotch lighthouse engineers; advocate by profession, but writer by nature and by trade; to whom the rigorous Scotch climate was lovely but fatal, and who spat blood far too readily to be long comfortable anywhere; his own severest critic, painfully developing, rewriting, and reviewing all that he wrote; poet, novelist, short-story writer, critic, essayist; wanderer over the face of the earth, struggler against poverty,—yet our greatest modern apostle of all noble childlikeness and of all manly whole-souled cheerfulness; buried, as he wished, on a mountain-top in the Samoan wilderness, with these words (now, perhaps, covered deep with vegetation) over his grave:

"Glad did I live, and gladly die;
And I laid me down with a will."

No romance produced by this staunch advocate of romance exceeds in power the vivid realism of his own life.

To one who visits Edinburgh, where Robert Louis Stevenson was born on November 13, 1850, it appears that a very slight inherited tendency toward romance would suffice in that noble city. Men must have been still living, in Stevenson's boyhood, who had personally known Walter Scott. In one direction from the city, a short walk for a boy and his father, was the seaport of Leith, with its fishing-boats, its maritime population, and the vast stream of the Forth River ebbing and flowing with the North Sea tides. In other directions were hills and vales and lochs and burns famous in Scotch history—Melrose, Dunfermline, and Stirling. At one end, the lower end, of the great ridge which divides the city into two parts, to-day as then one sees Holyrood Palace, bare, mediæval, and forbidding, its Gothic chapel roofless and paved with graves, Mary Queen of Scots' great sin and all the suffering brought by it upon Scotland resting upon the Palace like a deep shadow even in the brightest sunshine; on the cliff above Holyrood Palace,—the bare, dark, treeless, rock shelved only here and there with grass,—climbing past Jennie Deans' cottage one arrives at Arthur's Seat, glorious for outlook and hoary with traditions; then up the street from Holyrood Palace, along the top of the great ridge, one passes the house of John Knox, the Scottish Houses of Parliament (their prestige long since transferred to

London), the site of the old Tolbooth or prison ("the heart of Midlothian"), and the Church of St. Giles where Jennie Deans asserted the inviolability of Scotch Presbyterianism by using the envoy of the English Archbishop as a target and her folding-stool as a missile; on up the street one comes to where the ridge terminates in a mighty promontory crowned by a fortress—the Castle. From all parts of the city its battlements are the dominant object, and every day at noon young and old look up to it to catch sight of the puff of smoke and hear the belated roar by which a cannon informs them that it is high noon, that the King still lives, and Scotland still is free.

And Stevenson was not dependent for romantic nurture on these immediate surroundings, all of which he loved and has gratefully celebrated in his works. He made with his father tours of inspection to the lighthouses of northern Great Britain—to Little Ross lighthouse which his father had built, to the thirty or more lighthouses which an uncle had built, and the twenty-four more difficult ones erected by his grandfather—one of them the Bell Rock lighthouse, where in a single year before its erection seventy sail were wrecked, and where in all the time since its erection not a single wreck has occurred.

Among the influences which formed Stevenson note further a well-stocked and much-read home library, a mother who had passed on to Stevenson not only a weak constitution but also a keen appreciation of literature and an atmosphere of orthodoxy in religion. All these, and a great deal more not accounted

for by either environment or heredity, fairly sing to you from the pages, chiefly and most clearly, perhaps, from the essays, written by this zest-giving man.

Stevenson did not set out to be a writer. The only son of so brilliant a house of engineers had to attempt the engineering profession first. After graduating from Edinburgh University, he did attempt it. He even won a Medal from the Edinburgh Society of Arts for a masterful paper on the improvement of light-house apparatus. The outdoor activities of the profession pleased him. But the indoor ones, the drafting and the reckoning, almost killed him—he was already pretty much what he later called himself, a "complication of cough and bones." And he knew where his nature would find the expression it craved. It was not in engineering.

As a schoolboy it was his custom, so he tells us, to carry everywhere two books—one to read, one to write in. Hazlitt, Lamb, Wordsworth, Defoe, Hawthorne, Montaigne, even German writers, he would in turn read and imitate; in his modest way, he called it "playing the sedulous ape." That for him, the successful imitation, the striving, the expression of himself, *that* was fun, it was living.

But there was no recognized profession of letters. It seemed to his earnest Scotch parents as a profession of canoeing or trout-fishing, or sunset-gazing might seem to us. It was determined that he should study law. And in 1875 he was admitted to the bar. He must have been an odd sight among the black-gowned advocates waiting for clients at the Edin-

burgh courts, this gaunt, stooping, great-eyed fellow, his gown flecked with cigarette ashes, and his face reflecting his desire to be off and away from it all.

In 1876 he did get away to make a canoeing tour of Belgium and France with Sir Walter Simpson; and if you want an experience better than taking the trip yourself, read his *An Inland Voyage.* Two years later he made a tour through the mountains of Brittany, alone except for the jackass, Modestine, who carried his pack; you may enjoy this adulterated solitude of Stevenson's in his *Travels with a Donkey.*

These are the beginning. They really consist of essays. And in *Virginibus Puerisque, Familiar Studies of Men and Books,* and *Memories and Portraits* you may read other products of this period which first appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* and elsewhere.

Some stories followed, also a play (*Deacon Brodie,* in collaboration with the poet and editor, W. E. Henley); for Stevenson, as you see in *A Penny Plain and Twopence Colored,* was subject to the glamor of the theater. At the same time he was writing *Lay Morals,* a treatise on ethics; for he had an intensely serious side. As yet he had not caught the public. He was at this time experiencing the pinch of poverty, as well as the sufferings of invalidism and of mere authorship.

And his testing time was not ended. He fell in love. The lady was already married—not in the way that is ratified in heaven, so the sequel clearly shows, but nevertheless married. She returned from France, where Stevenson had met her, to California to secure

a divorce. Stevenson followed her. Naturally his strict parents did not heartily approve. It was no errand to be financed by Scotch Presbyterians. Stevenson consequently shipped to New York in the steerage, and crossed the United States in an emigrant train—one tin basin for the ablutions of four, squalling child in the next seat, cursing trainmen to herd you like sheep! He endured it all, and gave us later his cheerful *Amateur Emigrants* and *Across the Plains.*

The effect of his hardships was almost fatal. On April 16, 1880, he wrote from San Francisco to his friend, Mr. Edmund Gosse:

"You have not answered my last; and I know you will repent when you hear how near I have been to another world. For about six weeks I have been in utter doubt; it was a toss-up for life or death all that time; but I won the toss, sir, and Hades went off once more discomfited. This is not the first time, nor will it be the last, that I have a friendly game with that gentleman. I know he will end by cleaning me out; but the rogue is insidious, and the habit of that sort of gambling seems to be a part of my nature; it was, I suspect, too much indulged in youth; break your children of this tendency, my dear Gosse, from the first. It is, when once formed, a habit more fatal than opium—I speak, as St. Paul says, like a fool. I have been very sick; on the verge of a galloping consumption, cold sweats, prostrating attacks of cough, sinking fits in which I lost the power of speech, fever, and all the ugliest circumstances of the disease; and I have cause to bless God, my wife that is to be, and one Dr. Bamford (a name the Muse repels), that I have come out of all this, and got my feet once more upon a little hilltop, with a fair prospect of life and some new desire of living. Yet I did not wish to die, neither;

only I felt unable to go on farther with that rough horse-play of human life: a man must be pretty well to take the business in good part. Yet I felt all the time that I had done nothing to entitle me to an honorable discharge; that I had taken up many obligations and begun many friendships which I had no right to put away from me; and that for me to die was to play the cur and slinking sybarite, and desert the colors on the eve of the decisive fight."

For seven years, with only brief periods of comparative health, he continued (what we call) an invalid, seeking relief now in Scotland at a home given him by his reconciled father, now in Switzerland, at length in the Adirondack Mountains, New York. Yet at frequent intervals he produced the stories, the verses, the essays which we cherish, writings reflecting only the bravest and staunchest of spirits. *Virginibus Puerisque,* a series of essays, appeared in 1880. *Treasure Island,* 1883, was the first to "catch" the public. His best stories—*The Merry Men, Markheim, Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* and others—were followed, in 1887, by another series of essays—*Memories and Portraits.* With his novel *Kidnapped,* 1886, his position as a writer became established, his income consequently at last assured.

A yachting excursion to the South Seas in 1888-1889, a visit to Honolulu, the purchase of an estate in Samoa, and his settlement there in 1890 followed. Vailima (five rivers), the name given to his estate, and Tusitala (teller of tales), the name given him by the natives, thus became associated with this frail but indomitable author.

In 1884, he had written to his friend, the poet Henley:

"This pleasant middle age into whose port we are steering is quite to my fancy. I would cast anchor here, and go ashore for twenty years, and see the manners of the place. Youth was a great time, but somewhat fussy. Now in middle age (bar lucre) all seems mighty placid. It likes me; I spy a little bright café in one corner of the port, in front of which I now propose we should sit down. There is just enough of the bustle of the harbor and no more; and the ships are close in, regarding us with stern windows—the ships that bring deals from Norway and parrots from the Indies. Let us sit down here for twenty years, with a packet of tobacco and a drink, and talk of art and women. By and by, the whole city will sink, and the ships too, and the table, and we also; but we shall have sat for twenty years, and had a fine talk; and by that time, who knows? exhausted the subject."

Just one-half of the period he requested was allowed him. His sitting was often among bed-pillows; all writing was at length prevented by an attack of scrivener's cramp; and even talking, in the ordinary sense, was occasionally prevented: *St. Ives* (posthumous) was dictated to his amanuensis in deaf and dumb language while he was too ill to speak. Yet there is no sign of his having begun to "exhaust the subject." *Weir of Hermiston,* upon which he was working at the last, is recognized as, so far as it goes, the greatest of his novels.

The rupture of a blood-vessel in his brain brought about his sudden death on December 4, 1894. Sixty natives cleared a path sufficient for them to carry his

body to the place he had designated, a forest-covered peak of Mt. Vaea. There on his tomb appears the *Requiem* he had composed:

"Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

"This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be:
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."

The roll of the last three centuries exhibits no name more inspiring than Stevenson's. The twentieth century possesses few heritages more valuable than the record and the works of this poet, fiction-writer, essayist.

APPENDIX I

Kinds of Essays

No rigid or elaborate classification of Essays seems practicable. The terms "subjective" and "objective," however, are suggestive, and in the main exclusive (cf. pp. 110-112 above). The further subdivisions, also the relation of essays to other types of literature, indicated in the table on page 197, have proved useful.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
LYRIC POETRY
ESSAYS

Chiefly Subjective *Chiefly Objective*

1. Exhibiting mere exuberance of thought and spirit.

2. Exhibiting deliberate effort to entertain by displaying self.

3. Involving treatment of some subject with simply "personal touches."

4. Concerned primarily with a (recent) book, a recent occurrence, or a prevailing conception.

5. Constituting an independent expression of the author's serious "message."

HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY (extended, comprehensive, existing solely for sake of topic treated).
FICTION.

APPENDIX II

Minor English Essayists

Below will be found brief characterizations of the English essayists who are not treated in the preceding pages, yet whose essay-writings are frequently met with. In each of the four groups, which are arranged chronologically by centuries, the individuals are arranged alphabetically.

Seventeenth Century

Browne, Sir Thomas (1605-1682), physician and scholar; essay-like passages occur in his *Religio Medici,* 1643, *Urn Burial,* 1658, and *Vulgar Errors* (*Pseudodoxia Epidemica*), 1646.

Defoe, Daniel (1661?-1731), author of *Robinson Crusoe,* journalist and novelist; in his *Review,* 1704-1713, and elsewhere published many virtual essays.

Dryden, John (1631-1700), poet and dramatist; his many prose prefaces and introductions, chiefly critical and often bitterly controversial, are sometimes called essays.

Earle, John (1601?-1665), Bishop of Salisbury, poet and divine, wrote *Micromosgraphie, or a Piece of the World Discovered in Essayes and Characters,* 1628.

Felltham, Owen (1602?-1668), wrote *Resolves, Divine, Morall, Politicall,* 1620, a series of moral es-

says bearing some resemblance to Bacon's *Essays,* which were frequently enlarged and reissued.

Forde, Thomas (fl. 1660), in *The Times Anatomized in Several Characters,* 1647, reflects influence of Montaigne.

Fuller, Thomas (1608-1661), divine and historian; his *Good Thoughts in Bad Times,* 1645, and *History of the Worthies in England,* 1662, contain sections resembling essays.

Hyde, Edward (1609-1674), Earl of Clarendon, historian of the Rebellion or Civil War, 1702-1704, wrote also *Reflections upon Several Christian Duties, Divine and Moral, by Way of Essays,* 1727.

Osborne, Francis (1593-1659), in his *Advice to a Son* and *Miscellany of Sundry Essays, Paradoxes, Etc.,* dimly deflects Bacon.

Overbury, Sir Thomas (1581-1613), poet and courtier; prose *Characters* were appended to his poem, *The Wife,* 1614.

Swift, Jonathan (1667-1745), pamphleteer and satirist, contributed to *The Tatler, The Examiner,* and other periodicals, and wrote various satirical and controversial pamphlets more or less like essays.

Temple, Sir William (1628-1699), diplomatist, gardener, and author; published extended and rather pedantic *Essays,* 1680, 1692.

Eighteenth Century

Budgell, Eustace (1686-1737), a cousin of Joseph Addison, and a contributor to *The Spectator.*

Chesterfield (Philip Dormer), Lord (1694-1773), author of *Letters to His Son,* contributed essays to periodicals.

Cobbett, William (1762-1835), politician and agriculturist; published periodicals in both the United States and England. His *Rural Rides,* 1830, reports a series of political tours through England.

Cowper, William (1731-1800), poet and translator; contributed a few essays to *The Connoisseur,* 1756, and other periodicals.

Fielding, Henry (1707-1754), novelist; wrote imitations of *The Spectator* for *The Champion,* 1741, and other periodicals.

Franklin, Benjamin (1706-1790), diplomat and scientist; published imitations of *Spectator* papers in *The New England Courant,* in *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* 1729 ff., and in *Poor Richard's Almanac,* 1732 ff.

Gibbon, Edward (1737-1794), historian; wrote miscellaneous essays (published, 1796).

Hume, David (1711-1776), philosopher and historian; author of various essays, chiefly philosophical, 1741 ff.

"Junius," signature attached to a series of seventy *Letters,* 1769-1772, in the London *Public Advertiser,* dealing boldly with current political conditions. The identity of Junius has never been established.

Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley (1689-1762), in her various *Letters* included passages sometimes classed as essays.

Paine, Thomas (1737-1809), radicalist and pamphleteer.

Reynolds, Sir Joshua (1723-1792), painter, is remembered among essayists for his *Discourses on Art.*

Richardson, Samuel (1689-1761), novelist, contributed to *The Rambler.*

Smith, Adam (1723-1790), political economist, preceded and followed his *Wealth of Nations,* 1776, with learned essays on various subjects.

Sterne, Laurence (1713-1768), novelist.

Walpole, Horace (1717-1797), wit and letter-writer, contributed papers to *The World,* 1753.

Warton, Joseph (1722-1800), critic, contributed literary criticisms to *The Adventurer,* 1753.

Nineteenth Century

Alcott, Amos Bronson (1799-1888), American, friend of Emerson; contributed to *The Dial* (see p. 135 above).

Bagehot, Walter (1826-1877), political economist, literary critic.

Besant, Sir Walter (1838-1901), novelist and critic.

Brougham, Lord Henry (1778-1868), a founder of the *Edinburgh Review* (see p. 111 above), and one of its early contributors.

Brown, Dr. John (1810-1882), Scotch surgeon and essayist; author of *Rab and His Friends,* 1859.

Coleridge, Hartley (1796-1849), poet (son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge), and contributor to *Blackwood's.*

Coleridge, Mary Elizabeth (1861-1907), poet, novelist, and essayist.

Curtis, George William (1824-1892), American journalist and publicist; author of *Prue and I,* 1856, *Potiphar Papers,* 1856, etc.

"Eliot, George" (Mary Ann Evans Cross), (1819-1880), novelist, author of miscellaneous essays, chiefly of a series entitled *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such,* 1879.

Fuller, (Sarah) Margaret (1810-1850), American writer, first editor (1839-1842) of *The Dial* (see p. 135 above).

Gladstone, William Ewart (1809-1898), statesman, orator, and critic; author of essays dealing with religious and classical subjects.

Greeley, Horace (1811-1872), American journalist, author of various essays, mostly editorials, of great contemporary significance.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel (1804-1864), American novelist and short-story writer; included many essays in *Mosses from an Old Manse,* 1846, *Our Old Home,* 1863, etc.

Higginson, Thomas Wentworth (1823-1911), American man of letters; author of *Atlantic Essays,* 1871, *Cheerful Yesterdays,* 1898, etc.

Holland, Dr. Josiah Gilbert (1819-1881), American editor and poet; wrote *Timothy Titcomb's Letters,* 1858, etc.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell (1809-1894), American physician and poet; author of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table,* 1857-1858, *The Poet at the Breakfast Table,* 1872, etc.

Huxley, Thomas Henry (1825-1895), scientist,

writer, and lecturer on topics of scientific significance.

JEFFERIES, RICHARD (1848-1887), author of various sketches of English rural life.

JEFFREY, LORD FRANCIS (1773-1850), judge and literary critic; founder (together with certain others, see p. 111 above) of *Edinburgh Review;* to it he contributed about two hundred articles.

LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE (1775-1864), adventurer and man of letters; *Imaginary Conversations,* 1831, and numerous pro-Latin essays.

LANIER, SIDNEY (1842-1881), American poet and lecturer; author of *Science of English Verse,* 1880.

LOCKHART, JOHN GIBSON (1794-1854), biographer of Sir Walter Scott, and contributor to the great English Reviews.

LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL (1819-1891), American poet, critic, and essayist.

M'CARTHY, JUSTIN (1830-1912), Irish journalist and novelist.

MARTINEAU, HARRIET (1802-1876), author of serious essays on miscellaneous topics.

MITFORD, MARY RUSSELL (1787-1855), novelist and dramatist, author of neighborhood sketches entitled *Our Village,* 1824.

MORE, HANNAH (1745-1833), dramatist and novelist; wrote also a few essays.

NORTON, CHARLES ELIOT (1827-1908), American scholar, editor, translator, and essayist; friend of Ruskin.

PATER, WALTER (HORATIO) (1839-1894), subtle critic and stylist; essays on classical subjects.

PAULDING, JAMES KIRKE (1779-1860), American novelist and essayist; friend of Washington Irving.

POE, EDGAR ALLAN (1809-1849), American poet and critic.

SMILES, SAMUEL (1812-1904), biographer, author of *Self-Help,* 1859, and of similar books.

SMITH, SYDNEY (1771-1845), one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review* (see p. 111 above).

SOUTHEY, ROBERT (1774-1843), poet-laureate, biographer, essayist, contributor to literary periodicals.

SPENCER, HERBERT (1820-1903), philosopher, author of *Education,* 1861, and other serious essays.

SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES (1837-1909), poet and critical essayist.

SYMONDS, JOHN ADDINGTON (1840-1893), writer of critical essays, many of them dealing with the Renaissance.

THOMPSON, FRANCIS (1859-1907), poet and critic, contributor to literary critical periodicals.

THOREAU, HENRY DAVID (1817-1862), American naturalist and radicalist; author of *Walden Pond,* 1854, and other series of essays.

WARNER, CHARLES DUDLEY (1829-1900), American writer of humorous essays.

WHIPPLE, EDWIN PERCY (1819-1886), American writer and lecturer.

WILLIS, NATHANIEL PARKER (1806-1867), American journalist and poet.

WILSON, JOHN ("CHRISTOPHER, or KIT, NORTH") (1785-1854), noted Scotch contributor to *Blackwood's. Noctes Ambrosianae,* 1822-1835.

APPENDIX III

Contemporary Essayists

Benson, Arthur Christopher (1862-), essayist and poet; author of *The House of Quiet,* 1901, *Beside Still Waters,* 1907, etc.

Birrell, Augustine (1850-), long Chief Secretary for Ireland, essayist, and lecturer on literary topics.

Briggs, LeBaron Russell (1855-), Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and Professor in Harvard University; author of *School, College, and Character,* 1901, and other volumes of essays.

Bryce, James (1838-), historian and diplomat.

Burroughs, John (1837-), American naturalist and essayist.

Chesterton, Gilbert Keith (1874-), journalist.

Crothers, Samuel McChord (1857-), American Unitarian minister; author of *The Gentle Reader,* 1903, *The Pardoner's Wallet,* 1905, etc.

Dobson, (Henry) Austin (1840-), poet and essayist.

Dowden, Edward (1843-), Professor of English Literature in Dublin University, Shakespearean scholar, critical essayist.

Gosse, Edmund (William) (1849-), of Trinity College, Cambridge; critical essayist and poet.

Harrison, Frederic (1831-), scholar and publicist; critic of nineteenth century authors.

Howells, William Dean (1837-), American novelist, essayist, and critic; contributes *Editor's Easy Chair* papers to *Harper's Magazine.*

Lucas, Edward Verrall (1868-), author of *Over Bemerton's,* etc.

Lynn, Margaret (1869-), Professor of English in the University of Kansas; contributor to *Atlantic Monthly.*

Mabie, Hamilton Wright (1846-), American journalist and critic.

Matthews, (James) Brander (1852-), Professor of Dramatic Literature in Columbia University, contributor to current periodicals.

Morley, John, Lord (1838-), statesman, biographer, and literary critic.

Perry, Bliss (1860-), Professor of English Literature in Harvard University; former editor of *Atlantic Monthly;* author of *Park Street Papers, Carlyle: How to Know Him,* etc.

Repplier, Agnes (1858-), American writer of essays dealing with topics of current interest.

Saintsbury, George (Edward Bateman) (1845-), Professor of English in University of Edinburgh, author of numerous critical essays.

Wendell, Barrett (1855-), Professor of English in Harvard University, writer on literary, national, and international topics.

WINTER, WILLIAM (1836-), American dramatic critic.

WOODBERRY, GEORGE EDWARD (1855-), American poet and critic; Professor of Poetry in Columbia University.

YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER (1865-), Irish poet, dramatist, and literary critic.

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